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ABSTRACT

Effective instructional management processes come in many guises, but all share four essential components: (1) a set of educational goals toward which progress can be measured; (2) a means of assessing students' instructional needs and determining placement and grouping; (3) an organizational structure and instructional delivery process capable of providing alternatives and flexible uses of resources; and (4) a method for monitoring progress toward goals. This handbook discusses these components and their implications for effective education and suggests the procedures by which school districts can implement them. Among the specific topics addressed are (1) planning, including selecting planners, ensuring commitment to systematic planning, and establishing agreement on definitions, philosophies, and direction; (2) assessing and prioritizing instructional needs in such areas as school climate, management practices, and instructional subject areas, and setting goals to meet them; (3) obtaining effective leadership from administrators, staff members, teachers, and parents; (4) teaching effectively within an instructional management framework; (5) evaluating the program, its application, and its results; and (6) working toward consensus concerning the purposes of education. Throughtout the book, the experiences of several school districts using instructional management serve as illustrations or provide models for reader consideration. (PGD)

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EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTIONAL MANAGEMENT

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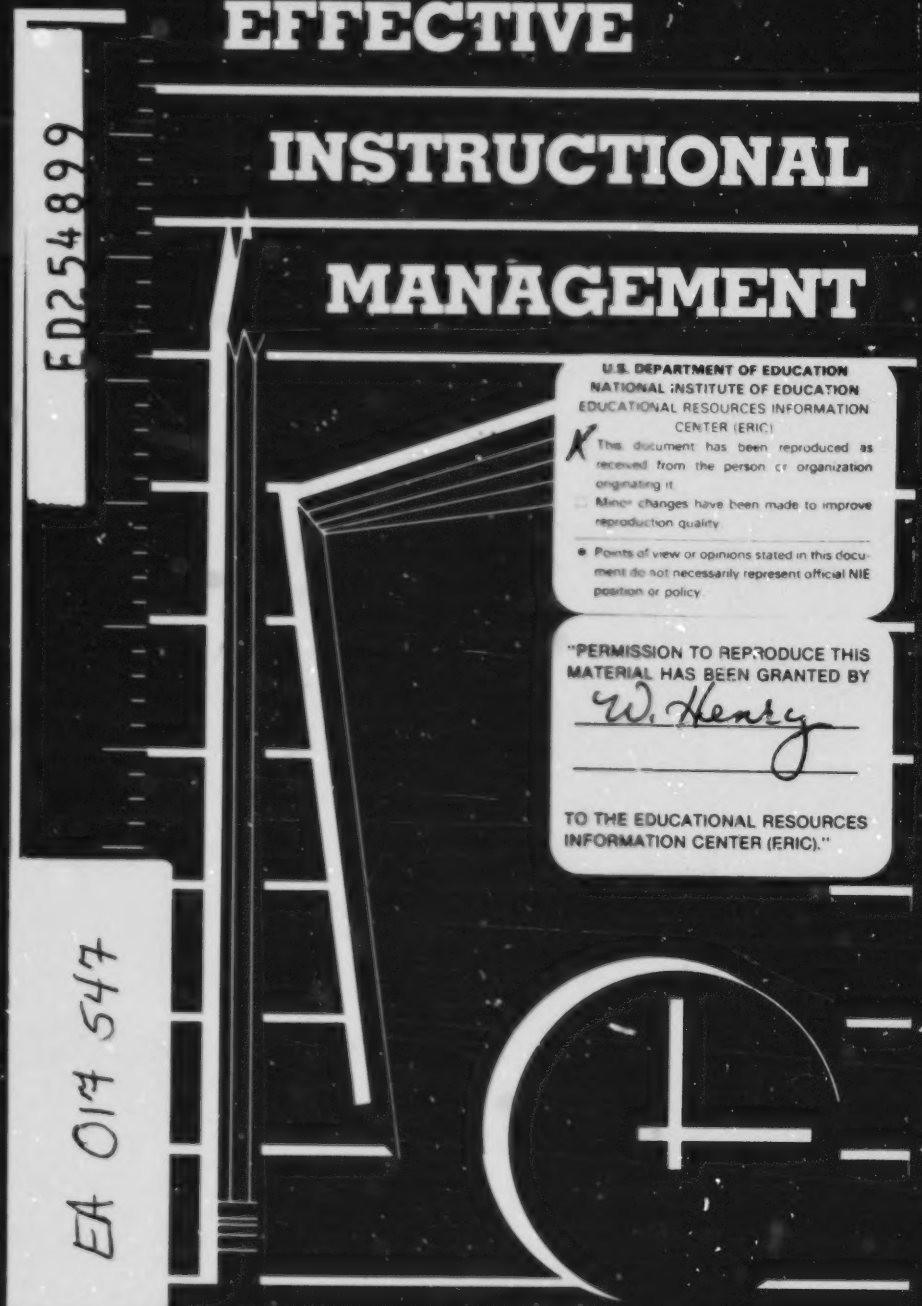

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Effective Instructional Management

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Foreword

There is a "bottom line" for our schools. That bottom line must be assuring that knowledge and skills are effectively taught and learned, that talents are enhanced, and that, ultimately, students are prepared to live challenging and productive lives. What is taught and how it is taught make a profound difference for today's students who will be leaders of our communities, our states or provinces, and our nation tomorrow.

Effective instructional management is basic to educational excellence. It is a bread and butter issue. Nothing should be more basic for the true educational leader. Yet, the management of instruction in our schools has sometimes faltered. When that situation takes place, students lack needed preparation for life . . . and schools lose support. We can't allow that to happen.

A number of highly regarded groups have conducted studies and issued reports on the condition of education in our nation. These groups have made a number of recommendations that demand consideration by the schools, many related to instructional improvement.

Education is back on the national agenda. Citizens are concerned about educational quality. The climate is right to build support for even more effective education. That is just one reason why the American Association of School Administrators commissioned *Effective Instructional Management*.

We hope this book will move instructional improvement to the action stage in schools across the nation. While not every idea, not every concept is addressed, this book does explore the definition of effective instructional management, suggests planning methods, discusses needs assessments, emphasizes the importance of leadership, examines the role of the teacher, and puts forth methods for determining results and building consensus for improvement among staff and community. We have also included a number of

success stories, examples of school systems that have taken effective instructional management from theory into practice. Of course, many schools have undertaken programs aimed at improving instruction. We have mentioned these school systems simply to provide some concrete examples.

"Leadership for Learning" is the motto of the American Association of School Administrators. We hope this book will be studied and discussed by administrators, teachers, board members, parents and others, working together to assure the best possible education for students. Effective education is AASA's real "bottom line."

Paul B. Salmon, Ed.D.
Executive Director
American Association
of School Administrators

CHAPTER 1

WHAT IS EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTIONAL MANAGEMENT?

The American educational system needs help. During the past few decades, there has been no shortage of critical attention focused on the "products" of the public schools. Controversies over the back-to-basics movement, minimum competency testing, reversal of grade inflation and the like have all been attempts to correct what many observers, including a good number of educators, have seen as a serious problem for schools in living up to the American promise of educational opportunity for all.

Fueling this massive criticism were media accounts of sliding test scores on standardized achievement tests and of reports from employers and institutions of higher education that public high school graduates are ill-equipped to meet the demands of work or further study. In the late 1970s, after ten years of dismaying results on polls of the public's attitudes toward their schools and many other public institutions, the phenomenon earned a name that has stuck—Crisis in Public Confidence.

Few school systems have been untouched by this malaise. Even where student scores remained high, the public perception has quite often been that education everywhere is in trouble. The prevalent attitude is that the local schools may not be as bad as those in neighboring communities or the nation at large, but, nevertheless, that things were still better in the old days. Large urban districts, in particular, were often viewed in a negative light as low test scores, vandalism, and social issues seemed to bear witness that inner-city students were disproportionately heir to the apparent collapse of the dream of quality "common schools."

The Sputnik launching served as a catalyst for educational reform movements initiated in the 1960s and followed through in the 1970s. But the lofty goals of these reform programs, to upgrade instruction at all levels and to end social and educational inequities, proved costly. Also, most attempts were piecemeal and reactive.

which further reduced their effectiveness. Entering the tight budget period of the 1980s, it became clear that reform by addition—new programs, new specialists, new equipment—may no longer be practical nor even possible.

Then, the 1980s brought a period of renewed interest in education. Efforts on the part of the schools to build public confidence and a series of reports issued by groups such as the National Commission on Excellence in Education and the Task Force on Education for Economic Growth. Education returned to the national agenda. Attention to standards, time on learning, merit pay, and relationships between schools and the community took center stage. Increased attention was focused on achievement with particular attention to achievement in specific curriculum areas. Educational leaders were challenged with an opportunity to improve education and build support.

Need for Planning

Besides lack of funds and rising expectations, the problem, at least in many schools, has been an absence of coherence in planning and implementing incremental educational improvement. Long term program development has been sacrificed for short term gains and the quick fix solution. Fortunately, school leadership is redirecting its focus. Two key factors for attaining coherence are coming to the forefront: first, instructional improvements are being grounded in established goals and objectives tied to measurable academic results, and second, workable means of systematically managing instruction are emerging.

This approach to school improvement intertwines three separate bodies of knowledge:

- Research on the factors of school and teacher effectiveness
- Investigations into the link between time and learning
- Studies verifying the application of management principles to the field of education.

The result is instruction managed to achieve or more nearly accomplish predetermined educational goals than might be the case otherwise. To describe these methods to produce more predictable learning outcomes, rather than random results, we will use the general term *effective instructional management* in this book.

The goal of providing effective instruction is basic to the mission of education, and while there are many different strategies for reaching this goal, the goal itself needs no justification. It is for that reason we chose *effective instructional management*, rather than less encompassing terminology like "mastery learning," "out-

come-based learning," "competency based education," and others. These terms represent specific prescriptions used by instructional technicians. While purists may object to lumping all these approaches together under the rubric of effective instructional management, the term's wider applicability seems to warrant its use.

Before defining effective instructional management, it is probably best to dispense with two other possible objections to this terminology. Any school administrators worth their salt could lay claim to being managers of instruction and there would be a certain element of truth in such a statement. Often, however, only some aspects of the instructional process can be truly identified as being managed. Effective instructional management aims at securing more control over more of the learning process than is usually the case—the more systematic the overall process, the larger the number of students who will experience success.

"Management" in Education

Some school administrators recoil when the word "management" is introduced into an education discussion. Nevertheless, over the years, this reaction has cooled, since the uneasy fears of many educators coalesced with the 1962 publication of Raymond Callahan's *Education and the Cult of Efficiency*. At that time, Callahan took "schoolmen" to task for perceiving themselves as managers or executives, rather than educators. This landmark study explains how the values and practices of business have influenced school administration. "Education is not a business. The school is not a factory," Callahan asserted, echoing many educators, disenchanted with the efficiency-expert approach to schooling.

Callahan's argument might be summed up with this sentence from the closing pages of his book: "Efficiency and economy—important as they are—must be considered in the light of the quality of education that is being provided." Hardly throwing the baby out with the bathwater, but when *Education and the Cult of Efficiency* came out two decades ago, it was Callahan's stern warning against abuse of management practices—rather than his admonition that they must be used wisely—that struck a responsive chord.

Even now, despite advances in management theory and growing concern for increased productivity and quality control in all sectors of professional endeavor, including education, there is a lingering sense in some quarters that the classroom is not a proper arena for practices forged in the corporate boardroom. Indeed, wholesale

transference of ideas suitable for the production of goods and services to an institution charged with the "production" of educated human beings would clearly be shortsighted.

Despite that caveat, educators are beginning to realize that management, per se, is not a bad word; that the traditional management framework of planning, organizing, activating, and controlling is virtually what an effective school administrator does. While the content and the outcome of school management differs markedly from the content and outcome of industrial management, the process remains similar:

- *Planning:* setting directions for the organization
- *Organizing*: coordinating the organizational system to produce the desired results
- *Activating*: acquiring, developing, and allocating the necessary resources; carrying out the plan
- *Controlling*: monitoring and evaluating both the results of the process and the process itself.

Each step in this management framework builds naturally on the one before, and they all rest, ultimately, on setting organizational goals and directions. It is on this first item that educational management often stumbles and, at times, falls. Goals may not be spelled out or clearly articulated. Part of the difficulty lies in the fact that society or local school boards occasionally change goals or priorities in a whimsical or shortsighted fashion. On the other hand, conscientious educators often have only themselves to blame for generating mountains of behavioral objectives written in such minute detail to be rendered overly cumbersome. Practical necessity calls for something between volumes of tedious objectives and abstract and obtuse goals.

"If we can only understand schools clearly in our minds," writes John Goodlad (*Educational Leadership*, April 1983), "we might be more successful in improving them." Goodlad's forthcoming report, "A Study of Schooling," has collected a tremendous amount of information over a nine-year period involving more than 1,000 classrooms. Goodlad found that at times even when schools set goals, they were ignored: "But a careful analysis of the state's goals for education raises in one's mind some serious questions about the parallelism between what many of these statements convey and what goes on in schools and classrooms."

Gordon Cawelti, executive director of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, warns, "We will be a long time demonstrating improved productivity in schools unless we overcome the problem of goal ambiguity." But as Cawelti ac-

knowledges, "The difficulty . . . in establishing objective productivity criteria will be facing fears of returning to 'the cult of efficiency.'" (Cawelti, 1981).

Like it or not, educators have had the issue of "productivity criteria" thrust on them by the public and in too many instances, by state legislators first. Some school administrators have proactively created instructional goals for their systems and even specified the proportion of students expected to achieve at stated academic levels. Regardless of the origin of instructional goals, a program of effective instructional management improves the likelihood of achieving these goals.

Definition of Effective Instructional Management

Instructional management, a somewhat fresh term, definitely belongs in the current educational lexicon. Without getting overly technical, instruction can be called the process of providing stimuli to a learner so that the stimuli—be it knowledge, attitudinal, or behavioral—will eventually be under the learner's control. Instructional management refers to the whole range of this process from choosing the stimuli, the particular learner or learners, the manner of presentation, the means of judging the results, and the action(s) to be taken based on the consequences. Instructional management is what goes into knowing what students should learn; arranging people, programs, materials and other resources into a configuration to promote learning; and making appropriate adjustments based on assessment of the results. *An effective instructional management system is one in which decisions are centered on the achievement of predetermined educational goals.*

A number of commercial programs and theoretical models incorporate "instructional management" within their titles. These programs or systems are all oriented toward making instructional decisions, although they vary significantly in how they contribute to this decision making. Instructional management systems may involve the latest computer technology and complicated mathematical equations. Sophisticated procedures for student testing and reporting formats may also be part of instructional management. Yet, aside from some of the "Buck Rogers" terminology of the advanced versions, the basic concept of instructional management is simple to understand and can be implemented legitimately in any school system.

Common Components of Instructional Management

The four common components of effective instructional management are:

- A set of guiding statements or goals that give directions and provide reference points for measuring results
- A means of assessing initial instructional needs and entry levels for diagnosing appropriate placements and grouping patterns
- An organizational structure and instructional delivery process capable of providing alternatives and flexible uses of resources
- A feedback method for monitoring and recording progress and evaluating actual results compared with goals.

These four components are simplified, yet their implementation can not be done without perspiration. Good teachers have been working to add such tools to their repertoire for centuries. The difference between teachers who seem to possess a natural instructional management system and those who don't is that when the former becomes explicitly defined, it forms the basis of a total management system, including specific teaching and management techniques that can be shared with others.

The Teacher and Instructional Management

Researchers and practitioners have searched diligently for keys to extract the inherent qualities of superior teachers and graft this essence on less endowed instructors. The bulk of the projects have fallen far short of their targets, often serving up "teacher proof" materials as substitute products. Many good teachers find these materials insulting and poor teachers reveal multiple cracks in the notion of "teacher proof." If teachers are left unconsulted on the sidelines, a similar fate could beset improperly designed or hastily attempted instructional management approaches. A fundamental process exists within instructional management that reduces this possibility—teachers are manipulators of the procedures and shapers of the system, rather than the other way around.

Another reason some teachers applaud effective instructional management programs lies within their interest in individualization of instruction. While not synonymous, the two concepts are fully compatible. Effective instructional management can involve teaching using whole-class techniques, small groups, individual students, or a combination of techniques. The more a teacher individualizes instruction, the more necessary a management system becomes.

There must be a way for the teacher to keep track of student progress through a variety of learning materials. Instructional management comes into play particularly if more than one subject or a large number of pupils are involved. Otherwise, the cognitive load and attendant stress on the teacher quickly turns the classroom into a disorganized shambles. To such a harried teacher, an effective instructional management program can be a lifesaver.

An effective instructional management system is built around the framework of a curriculum designed by "units" of instruction. Each unit of instruction contains pretesting diagnoses, prescriptive learning activities, post-testing, and recordkeeping. Obtaining and keeping these records, while not the end product, does put teachers in a position to analyze patterns for each student and adjust instruction accordingly.

Ideally, an effective instructional management system yields progress profiles for each individual; course, class, or teacher; school; and the school district. Thus, teachers, principals, administrators, and others have access to data on instructional achievements at all levels.

Competing Realities in School Management

As former AASA Associate Executive Director William G. Spady, now Director of the Far West Regional Laboratory, has observed the classroom is a complex social system organized around the two pillars of goals and roles. By *goals*, Spady means the instructional program and its specified outcomes or end products. By *roles*, he means not only the actors on the scene and the activities they perform but, in a larger sense, what might be called school affairs—scheduling, budgeting, purchasing, and the like. Too often, says Spady, school management is interpreted to emphasize the latter.

The result is not simply competing realities but conflicting priorities. Moving students expeditiously through a sequence of grade levels and curricula frequently takes precedence over ensuring that they reach predetermined educational outcomes at each step along the way. Viewed in that light, it is no wonder that some students graduate from high school without ever having acquired the essentials for future academic or occupational success.

There will always be some students, of course, whose ability, interest, and home environment are such that they will achieve in school in spite of—if not because of—the instruction they receive. But what of others? What is needed, clearly, is an instructional approach that is genuinely effective for the vast majority of students.

An increasing number of schools and school systems are now putting in place instructional management programs that serve that purpose. We examine projects developed in a few of these districts later in this book. For the most part, these instructional systems are grounded in the belief that virtually all students are capable of learning at least the essentials of the formal curriculum. Moreover, these schools have as their foundation publicly stated learning goals for all students and consider the achievement of these outcomes as a criterion of success for a school district.

These philosophical premises may not sound revolutionary, but their long term implications for instructional management are profound. Traditional evaluation methods that stress comparisons between students, for example, are relatively meaningless when each student's success is considered to be a measure of the particular goals he or she has mastered. Calendar-based promotions may become irrelevant, if credits can be awarded whenever goals are reached. Teaching, in these instructionally managed schools, should eventually accommodate the learning rates and styles of individual students, rather than the number of textbook chapters that must be "covered" before June.

Another important implication of the outcome-based approach to effective instructional management is its implied assumption of a commonality of goals and objectives from school to school within a district. While it is by no means impossible to set up such a system in individual classrooms or school buildings, the scope of the planning and implementation involved makes effective districtwide adoption more cost effective. Success stories in effective instructional management are found more commonly for school districts than for individual schools.

Where such an approach has yet to be implemented, principals and other school administrators may understandably feel that building-level autonomy is threatened if the strategy has its impetus from central office. This concern raises deeper questions about educational change and planning, which are addressed in Chapter 2.

Nevertheless, the prime mission of schooling is learning, pure and simple. That is the central focus of any school district. One way of bearing down on the quality and quantity of learning for a school district is by means of effective instructional management. This approach has the capability to form a districtwide quality control function reportable to school board members, the public at large or internal staff. However, that kind of accountability, though important, is a byproduct; the "product" is enhanced academic learning.

Making Schools Work

As stated earlier, effective instructional management has a partial foundation in the research-based literature on school effectiveness that burgeoned during the 1970s and 80s. Much of this literature is so familiar to educators by now that it need not be detailed here. What is important is the general consensus of this body of research—what amounts to a profile of an effective school. *Schools that work, the literature suggests, appear to have these characteristics in common:*

- Strong instructional leadership by the principal
- A safe and orderly atmosphere
- High expectations of all students
- Schoolwide emphasis on basic skills instruction
- Systematic monitoring and assessment of student performance.

To these characteristics can be added several other research-based strategies for improving student performance. For example:

- *Increased time on academic tasks*. Academic learning time—the time students spend engaged in appropriate learning tasks, is a major variable in student achievement, according to the AASA publication *Time on Task: Using Instructional Time More Effectively* (1982). Provided tasks are targeted to produce specific desired learning outcomes, and to accommodate the readiness and learning styles of individual students, then more learning time yields increased student achievement.
- *Improved teaching practices*. Research undertaken in classroom settings has identified those teaching and classroom management functions that are most effective in teaching students basic skills and knowledge. According to Allan Odden, director of the Programs Division, Education Commission of the States (1982), these include—

—Direct instruction including teaching to the whole class or to large groups
—Keeping students on academic tasks and covering extensive curricular content
—Providing highly structured questions that elicit high rates of correct answers from students
—Providing immediate, academically-oriented feedback, praising correct answers, and exploring incorrect ones
—Monitoring individual student performance during recitation periods and providing individualized feedback.

—*Long-term staff development*. Districts that have implemented effective instructional management programs have emphasized staff development as a necessary part of those programs. Drawing on inservice training designs that have emerged from school improvement research, these districts are training teachers in effective teaching and classroom management, and training principals in instructional management skills and collegial working relationships.

Finally, any definition of effective instructional management must answer the question, "Effective compared to what?" By what yardstick, in other words, will the results of instruction be measured? Central to the idea of effective instructional management is the idea of referencing student learning outcomes against established goals and precedents. In most districts with successful instructional management systems, this practice has meant developing a criterion-referenced assessment system to measure the attainment of publicly determined, clearly stated learning objectives. In most of these districts, the results—as measured against agreed-on criteria or in terms of standardized test scores—have been better than predicted.

In an article entitled "Using an Instructional Management System to Teach Writing Skills," Connie Gifford and Jane Huff of the Hazelwood Schools in Florissant, Missouri, have cited the advantages for the student and school district from their experience. They are:

- Students are taking writing skills seriously, perhaps for the first time. A recent survey of the students indicates that more than half of the students worked harder in the composition course as a result of the requirements placed on them by the criterion-referenced paragraph test.
- It identifies the students who may not ever be able to write a good paragraph but have managed to get to the tenth grade, and it forces the department to work out alternatives for these students.
- Parent reaction has been positive because parents are now assured that certain skills will be taught to their students.
- It ensures that the high school graduate will have minimum competency in handling the written language.

Effective, in short, means producing desired results, and that is precisely where the kind of instructional management outlined in this publication excels.

Summary

Research concerning teaching, learning, and school management has converged to provide educators with a set of theories and principles to use in designing school district instructional management systems. While approaches may vary slightly, district models share a common emphasis on improving student achievement. To be effective, an instructional management system must accomplish clearly stated learning objectives.

CHAPTER 2

PLANNING: FIRST STEP TO SUCCESS

Realistically, educators have to develop better methods of managing instruction and resources to allow for maximum efficiency, and at the same time, maintain curriculum programs to meet the needs of students. Day-to-day operations consume so much of the time, energy, and funds of most school districts and administrators that the pre-planning of new projects is often shortchanged. Yet, faulty implementation can often be traced to poor initial planning. Difficulties in educational planning are compounded by the fact that school administrators have to deal with political milieu and historical context before achieving acceptance of educational innovations.

How does an administrator implement a program of effective instructional management? Probably, the first step is to determine the reason for the district's possible interest in instructional management. Have test scores been less than satisfactory? Are parents or taxpayers demanding accountability? Are teachers searching for methods to improve instructional results? Has the board of education implied that youngsters may be slipping through the cracks?

Climbing On The Bandwagon

"Bandwagons crisscross the educational scene with regularity, and teachers and administrators jump on and fall off with equal regularity," so writes William Spady, director of the Far West Regional Laboratory, in his article, "Competency Based Education: A Bandwagon in Search of a Definition" in *Educational Researcher* (1977). But teachers and others are often skeptical of educational movements touted as panaceas by folks from the central office or the ivory tower. The *substance* of a movement does count. The support structure that upgrades learning accomplishments is more important than terminology such as minimum competency test-

ing, outcome-based education, or mastery learning. While confusion exists among professionals and the lay public about competency based education and similar outcome-based programs, most people consistently endorse the concept of explicit expectations measured in student results.

Those wishing to implement an effective instructional management system should approach their project in a similar vein. If properly maintained, an effective instructional management system can help ensure that learning is happening. Specific labels can be added or subtracted depending on the inclination of local educators and the prevailing terminology. By shifting priorities or emphasizing different elements of the approach, instructional management can be incorporated with most of the major movements of the last dozen years in the field of education.

By understanding the motives for considering instructional management, school administrators gain insight into the best way of introducing it into the schools. If teachers and principals have been criticizing each other for lack of program articulation, that may indicate a need for K-12 curricular objectives. In another situation, school personnel might want to improve the record-keeping functions. In either instance, the usefulness of a management approach can be brought to the front to foster acceptance by those involved with implementation.

The Importance of Planning

Former Cleveland superintendent, Paul Briggs, has said, "Success is seldom a matter of luck. It follows careful planning, is based upon good judgment, proper timing, and effective communications."

George Redfern, a longtime education consultant, states emphatically that "the quality and effectiveness of management in education can and does influence learning outcomes for youngsters. Educational planning is one of the most important means—if not the surest way—to improve managerial performance."

Very little takes place in an organization by itself, other than disorder and confusion. Success in education, as elsewhere, corresponds to lots of careful planning.

"Most often, what makes a program fail is poor planning," says Phyllis R. Pringle, an educational specialist with Educational Services Institute, Inc. Pringle, who has helped set up outcome-based curriculum systems in a number of school districts, advises districts: "Plan to plan. Who will do what? How? Plan for updating, and make your commitment commensurate with your resources."

One planning model that takes many of these factors into account was developed by John Hoben, superintendent of the Plymouth-Canton Community Schools in Plymouth, Michigan. The Plymouth-Canton plan (Figure 1) involves two phases:

1. *Strategic Planning,* which asks, "Where are we?" "Where do we want to go?" and "How much will it cost?"
2. *Operational Planning,* which overlaps strategic planning, begins with the question "How much will it cost?" and goes on to ask "How do we get there?" "Who will be responsible?" and "What will be the impact on our human resources?" The last step was added as a safeguard against individual and organizational burnout.

Plan to Plan

Instructional management, like other new programs, should receive thoughtful consideration up front. Quickly conceived projects are often resented and sometimes seen as encroachments by those they are designed to help. Teachers are not reluctant to change, but they are pragmatic. They are willing to modify past practices, if the better way can be demonstrated to be just that—a better way. A period of thinking through what is desired prior to formal planning is known as the "plan to plan."

William Rothschild in his book, *Putting It All Together*, has identified three guidelines for planning to plan: (1) know yourself, (2) appraise your planning resources, and (3) assess your own and your stakeholders' desires.

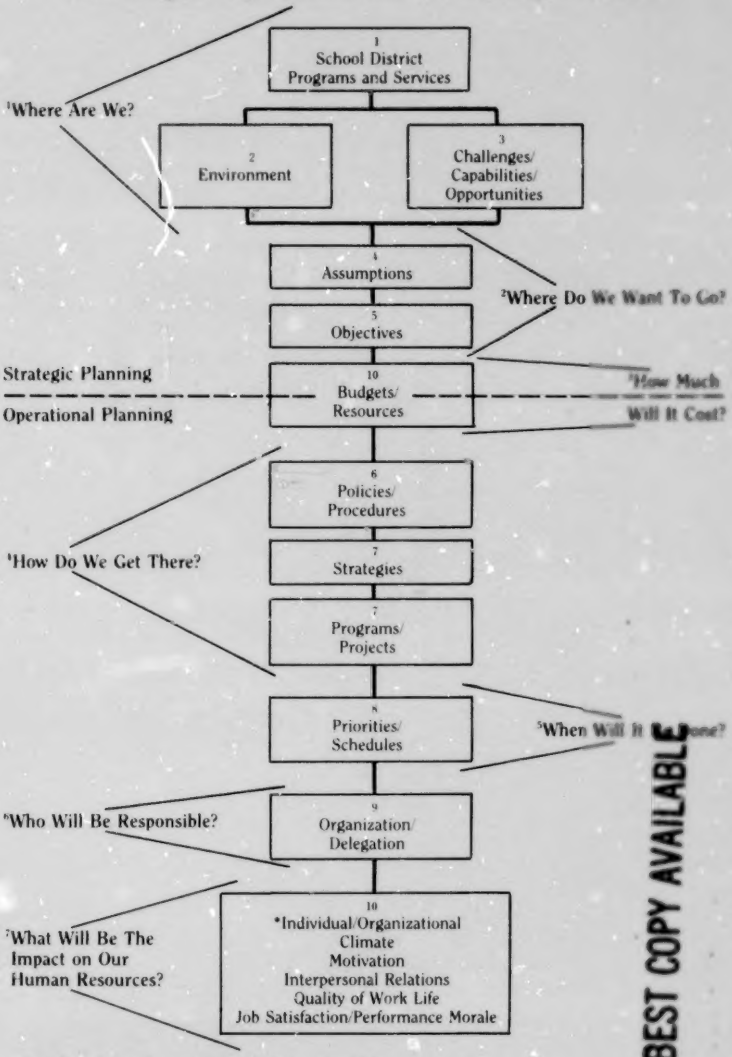
The key element in any plan is a free commitment by those affected to explore the project. Even the best superintendent cannot install an effective instructional management program alone. The prime place for a notion to begin might be in the minds of the superintendent or top administrators, but the plan must motivate others enough to work.

Who Makes Decisions?

Determine in the beginning who will make the decisions for designing instructional management. While some teachers or principals are individually pursuing improved instructional management, most programs are developed for districtwide use. This issue of organizational lines or responsibility has deep implications for effectiveness.

As a complex social system, school districts—like states or nations—have different types of structures. For the sake of simplicity,

Figure 1
The Plymouth-Canton Community Schools Strategic/Operational Planning Model


1 School District Programs and Services
[1]Where Are We?
2 Environment
3 Challenges/ Capabilities/ Opportunities
4 Assumptions
[2]Where Do We Want To Go?
5 Objectives
Strategic Planning
10 Budgets/ Resources
[4]How Much Will It Cost?
Operational Planning
6 Policies/ Procedures
[3]How Do We Get There?
7 Strategies
7 Programs/ Projects
8 Priorities/ Schedules
[5]When Will It Be Done?
[6]Who Will Be Responsible?
9 Organization/ Delegation
10 *Individual/Organizational Climate Motivation Interpersonal Relations Quality of Work Life Job Satisfaction/Performance Morale
[7]What Will Be The Impact on Our Human Resources?

*Additional Step Needed to Avoid Individual/Organizational Burnout

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let's consider two organizational analogies: school systems as republics or as federations.

A *republic* is defined as a state in which the supreme power rests in the body of citizens entitled to vote. Representatives chosen directly or indirectly by the citizens exercise the voting power of the citizens.

In this view, a school system's power, though vested in the superintendent and delegated to central office and line staff, actually flows from the members of the school board and the community.

A *federation*, on the other hand, is defined as a political unit with a central government formed by a number of separate states, each of which retains control of its own internal affairs. Translated loosely into school district terms, the superintendent acts as the central government, and individual schools—the "separate states" of the federation—control their own day-to-day internal workings.

Neither analogy, obviously, yields a full model for school districts today, and the difference between the two approaches is by no means so clear as these brief definitions might suggest. Indeed, it is worth noting that the difference—where there is one—is often more a matter of perception than of intent. A school district's goals and operations are shaped by the particular views of its leaders and may reflect, to some degree, either a republic or federation. Many aspects of school management reflect this dichotomy between the two views of school governance structure, but the central question involving instructional management is this: *Is there a quality control system for the entire school district, or is instruction managed by individual principals on a building-by-building basis?*

William Spady argues that if instructional management is to be effective, the school system must be a federation of semi-autonomous units. He feels the units should be joined by consensus in supporting a central governance entity whose purpose is not only to direct but to enable. In education, everything fights for priority: staffing, scheduling, budgeting, curriculum development, resource allocation, community relations—the list is seemingly endless. For instructional management to achieve priority status among these competing needs requires at least four conditions:

1. A process for arriving at socially endorsed goals and objectives for the district
2. Strong, committed leadership at the central office level
3. Effective two-way communications both within the district's hierarchy and between the district staff and its community clients
4. Building level autonomy for the management of day-to-day school affairs.

The federation notion of schooling best fosters these four factors, according to Spady, particularly when that notion emphasizes the concept that power shared is power multiplied—and reinforces that notion through decision making by consensus.

Preparing the Planning Team

As previously indicated, initial leadership could come from a mathematics teacher, a reading supervisor, an elementary principal, or the superintendent. Most likely, though, the superintendent will delegate planning responsibilities to an appropriate person, such as the assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction. Of course, the superintendent will want to be kept abreast of developments. Whoever serves as operational leader for instructional management should have a solid knowledge base about curriculum in general and an awareness of professional literature and research on learning theories, testing, and instructional management techniques. This background and experience forms a set of fundamental assumptions that lay a common ground to enhance the move toward instructional management. (Various leadership roles are more fully defined in chapters six and seven.)

The team of district professionals who do the actual writing of the instructional management program should be the cream of the crop. Many school districts use a process of applications, screening, and interviewing. Team members sometimes receive extra pay for their work.

Some school districts have pre-ordained curriculum teams for each discipline. In the Shaker Heights (Ohio) City School District, every classroom teacher volunteers for a curriculum committee, which plans the program for a particular discipline. Every school has several delegates on each committee and all grade levels are represented. This structure, based on Rensis Likert's "linking pin" theory, ensures cross-fertilization of ideas since everyone participates.

The selection of the instructional management planning team, whether an open or predetermined process, and the interaction of its membership will send off signals to the rest of the school community. The calculated selection of the team members could well determine the ultimate success of the project. And the "team" should read this book and others like it to learn about possible techniques and strategies.

Other worthwhile activities include: attending workshops, organizing presentations of commercial materials, visiting other school districts, arranging for outside speakers, talking with teachers

using the approach, and so on. Time invested in these activities results in positive returns, especially when instructional management "goes public."

Although situations and organizations vary, instructional management planners most often formulate the philosophical underpinnings of the approach for others up the organizational ladder to review. The team should have the expressed endorsements of the superintendent, school board, and perhaps others, of any basic assumptions and beliefs secured and disseminated before production is too far along. Why waste everyone's time, if the school board disavows any major tenets? Top level commitment is indispensable for success. Figure 2 summarizes the first major steps in the developmental process that should be taken for building an effective instructional management system.

Developing Premises for Improvement

In Johnson City, New York, clarification of the district's belief system was part of the "getting ready" phase. A philosophical statement of commitment was enacted that takes the form of an overarching goal: "to develop and maintain a learning environment in each of the district's schools based upon certain premises." These premises are:

1. Most students can master what schools consider necessary to learn. It is the task of the institution to provide sufficient time and support to bring this about.
2. Schools should be organized around validated data that indicate the circumstances and environment in which more pupils can learn more efficiently and more effectively.
3. Traditional beliefs, which hold schools' instructional practices and relationships in place, will be examined in terms of

Figure 2
Instructional Management: First Steps

- Identify Operational Leader(s)
- Formulate a Plan to Plan
- Prepare the Instructional Management Team
- Establish Definitions, Assumptions and Beliefs (with Staff and Community Feedback)
- Obtain Top Level Commitment to the Philosophy

current professional literature. Revisions and alterations will be effected when a practice or procedure is no longer validated by the data base.

4. The task of schools is to alter the learning process as needed to meet the varying needs of pupils.

5. Each pupil has a different learning rate and style, often changing with differing tasks. The learning environment must be flexible enough and sufficiently responsive to meet these needs.

6. Learning is a positive, not a punitive experience. Success nurtures new successes.

7. Learning is a continuous process and is not either terminated or restrained by artificial time considerations.

8. Effective learning requires that students have a full and total understanding of what is to be learned, how it can be learned, and what they must do to demonstrate mastery.

9. Learning is enhanced in a cooperative environment and conversely inhibited if made competitive.

10. It is the responsibility of the school to create more opportunities for more pupils to be successful in more challenging tasks. The emphasis is inclusionary and not exclusionary.

11. Successful learning enhances self-concept; positive self-concept stimulates successful learning.

12. Renewal of premises, practices, and procedures is ongoing.

In Johnson City these premises or learning specifications serve as a "decision-making screen" against which all instructional decisions must be measured. The learning specifications reflect current, validated data concerning pupil learning and school environment and are continually reviewed and renewed as new data emerge and become an accepted part of the professional literature.

A member of the Network for Outcome-Based Schools, Johnson City's philosophical principles echo those developed by the Network. But, in fact, Johnson City has elaborated on the Network's premises in order to provide concrete indicators that clarify further teaching strategies, staff development, and program implementation. For example, to the Network's first premise that "almost all students are capable of achieving excellence in learning the essentials of formal schooling," Johnson City adds the qualifier *provided that students*:

- Have sufficient time to learn
- Experience challenge with little threat
- Make decisions without fear of irreversible failure or criticism
- Have a supportive learning environment
- Have favorable learning conditions and quality instruction
- Have increased time on learning through active involvement in the learning process

- Have their performance expectations raised and are expected to achieve them.

To the Network's third premise that "the instructional process can be changed to improve learning," Johnson City adds *provided that teachers*:

- Improve planning procedures and clearly define expected outcomes and prerequisites
- Systematically control the learning process by teaching to stated objectives and providing the help necessary to achieve them
- Systematically manage change so that improvement will be evolutionary and not revolutionary.

Formulating Goals

Belief statements such as those developed in Johnson City give a school district's professional staff a shared frame of reference for developing districtwide goals and objectives. Commonly, the goal-setting process begins at the macro level—often using community surveys to determine perceptions—and proceeds to precisely delimited instructional goals for specific courses. In the Roseville Area Schools, Minnesota, for example, the instructional flow chart begins with the district's statement of purpose and general goals:

The general purpose of the Roseville Area Schools is to develop within each individual the human potential for a life that is rewarding and that contributes to the continuation and improvement of a society in which personal fulfillment is fostered.

The highest priority goals of the District 623 K-12 program are to help each student:

1. Learn the skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing.
2. Learn the skills of mathematics.
3. Learn how to find, examine, evaluate, and use information for making decisions.
4. Develop the understandings, skills, and attitudes needed to take part in the democratic process.
5. Understand how the world today is influenced by the past.

In pursuing these goals, the Roseville document continues "attention shall be given to help each student be sensitive and responsive to the needs and values of others; develop a sense of self-respect; develop a willingness and desire to learn; and enjoy learning." In addition, the district will "develop other important areas of human potential" by helping each student to "know and use good health habits; understand and develop creative expression; prepare for choosing a career; understand how to use and conserve natural resources wisely; and develop interests that will lead to

wise and enjoyable use of leisure time." From these global goal statements program goals, objectives and indicators for each course and grade level are developed.

Goals vs. Objectives

The process is similar in other districts: from a shared philosophy of education flow general goals; from these are derived specific instructional goals; and from these are developed instructional objectives. The Glendale Educational Management System (GEMS) manual in Glendale, Arizona, clearly distinguishes between goals and objectives. An instructional goal, according to the manual, "is a statement of broad direction, intent, or purpose," a general and timeless statement. Instructional goals are open to many interpretations and cannot be measured as stated. They are "the anchoring ideas from which terminal objectives are derived."

Terminal objectives, as defined in the manual, are statements describing what a student will be expected to do as the result of instruction. These objectives describe both testable student performance and the conditions under which performance is to occur. For example, in the objective "Given a set of data and graphs, the student will select the graph that correctly plots the data," the testable performance is "select the graph," and the conditions are set out in the words "given a set of data and graphs."

Other Functions of the Planning Team

The Alaska Gateway School District in Tok, Alaska, has been so interested in outcome-based instructional systems that Kenneth Klawunder was granted a partial sabbatical to attend Eastern Washington University and to visit exemplary school districts. Klawunder, in his travels, found many similar factors among school districts that have successfully developed instructional management systems, no matter the label used to identify the systems. He termed these factors, listed below, as essential:

- Change should be based on need
- The head administrator must be dedicated
- Formal board action is needed
- Program development must be evolutionary
- Teacher involvement is essential
- Staff development is critical
- A staff evaluation system is needed.

It's advisable that a team gearing up to study and/or implement an effective instructional management program address these "es-

sentials." In "Key Management Decisions for Implementing Mastery Learning," Beau Fly Jones of the Chicago Public Schools cites the key decision points as:

- Program elements—specification of instruction as *objectives*, use of *criterion-referenced tests*, content arranged in a *hierarchical sequence*, and learning units having a *four-phase cycle of instruction*
- Organizational decisions regarding placement and classroom instruction as well as the methods of curriculum delivery
- Supervision decisions regarding promotion, instructional goals, and monitoring.

A planning team must devote itself to understanding and coming to grips with the global issues raised by Klawunder and Jones and resist the temptation to immediately form subcommittees to start writing units of learning.

Other Decisions for the Planning Team

The next level of important decisions for the planning team according to Phyllis Pringle of Educational Services Institute are:

- The final format of the course of study itself
- The date for beginning program implementation
- The method of verifying achievement of outcomes
- The use of any data that verifies learning
- The responsibilities of principals, the task force, and teachers during development, implementation, and evaluation phases
- The schedule for revising the program in the future
- The method the district will use to select textbooks and materials to match student outcomes and performance objectives.

"The typical course of study," Pringle quotes a teacher as saying, "is developed by locking us in a room, telling us to write a course of study, and not letting us out until we are finished." This is the one-step plan. In an outcome-based program, learning outcomes (goals) and performance objectives as the key to the program, must be developed with care and refined. Pringle recommends a three-step approach, with revisions at each step. The *first cut* in Pringle's approach results in a quickly written rough draft that identifies student outcomes and grade level or course objectives. The *second cut* puts the outcomes and objectives into the proper sequence, and the *final cut* matches objectives with existing or desired testing programs.

Before an instructional management system is formally adopted, Pringle believes the system should undergo a full year of field testing. "First, no matter how good the task force's work is, it

must prove itself in the classroom," says Pringle. "The field test makes certain that it does, that objectives and criteria are realistic, and that verification measures produce the desired information. Second, the best way for every staff member to know the system is to use it."

New Skills and New Roles

"Teachers can't perform if they don't have the skills," says John Champlin, a professor at Texas Tech University, "and you can't always trust preparation programs to give them those skills." In developing a staff development program, Champlin advises that a district consider not only content, but frequency and duration of the training and who will conduct it. He stresses that inservice must be continuous.

In Johnson City, as in many other districts, the goal was to use outside consultants to train teachers to train their colleagues. "The result was an amazing spin-off in heightened morale," says Champlin, who was superintendent at the time.

In addition to gaining new skills, both principals and teachers often find themselves interacting somewhat differently under an outcome-based instructional management system. Relationships become more collegial than hierarchical, breaking the mold of traditional line-staff relationships. In describing what transpired in Johnson City, Champlin explains, "Mastery requires new roles for teachers and pupils. Emerging from these roles came revised role relationships, particularly those affecting the standard acceptance of the teacher as giver and the student as receiver. Opportunities for choice and fuller participation and influence for students soon emerged as priorities."

Principals in Johnson City underwent a similar shift in roles. "New skills and new roles for managers, particularly middle managers, also quickly emerged," says Champlin. "The traditional leader/subordinate role, so prevalent in many schools, had to be amended to promote more collaboration and collegiality. This often places middle managers in co-learner roles with colleagues."

When the association between classroom teachers and principals grows, there is change at the central office level as well. Says Jack Davidson, superintendent of schools in Tyler, Texas, the purpose of the central administration is to "provide support to make the relationship between student and teacher more effective" by making the principal a true instructional leader. "We tell principals, 'You design the kind of staff development programs you feel you need—based on hard information, not cute ideas—and our job is to provide resources and personnel to meet those needs.'"

Keeping Communication Open

Principals operate on official and unofficial signals from the central office-sanctions, incentives, and more subtle cues from their supervisors. Both a central office's formal policies and its informal practices should reflect the importance of instructional management if it is to be effective, and that means making a conscious effort for open communication among all levels of the staff.

In Tyler, a central committee that met regularly with representatives from each school fulfilled part of the communication functions. "We had to make sure we didn't have 27 schools operating as 27 separate school districts," comments Davidson, "so our central committee and campus reps worked to tie school goals together in a cohesive way."

Communications must also reach out to the public, so parents and other patrons will understand the significance of the work that is being done and the anticipated positive effect it will have on student learning. Here the district public relations officer has an important responsibility, both to encourage support for the program in its initial phases and to report honestly any results in clear, nonjargon terms.

Some districts, such as Glendale Union, Arizona, turn to the community as a first step for help in establishing learning priorities. Some invite community volunteers to consult in the planning stage, realizing that potential employers and local colleges and universities have a vested interest in the learning objectives graduating seniors will be expected to master. When community members are involved in setting up an instructional management system and when the school board is thoroughly briefed on each stage of its operation, any potential criticism of a program as "administrative mumbo-jumbo" will most likely be headed off and the program's assertive goals more clearly understood.

Priorities, Assessment, and Renewal

School districts constantly confront the matter of priorities. A school board and community may be enamored with the prospects of a total effective instructional management system for all curricular areas, but limited resources require a schedule of priorities to make clear what disciplines should come first. The planning team will have to wrestle with how to limit the scope of the initial implementation given local considerations. Some school districts that have obtained positive results without great fanfare have elected

to start a full scale transformation by adopting a commercial program with built-in instructional management features.

While there are some advantages to replicating what others have accomplished elsewhere either by using a commercial program or another district's project, many districts decide to create a unique effort. Regardless of the direction taken or regardless the disciplines established as priorities, such decisions are best made when they are based on a needs assessment or a planned cycle of renewal. (Data-based management and institutional renewal and assessment strategies are discussed in more detail in other chapters.)

"Districts that develop outcome-based educational programs do not just produce a course of study that states the outcomes," says Phyllis Pringle. "They implement the course of study in the classrooms, work to achieve the learning outcomes, and find out each year whether they did or not."

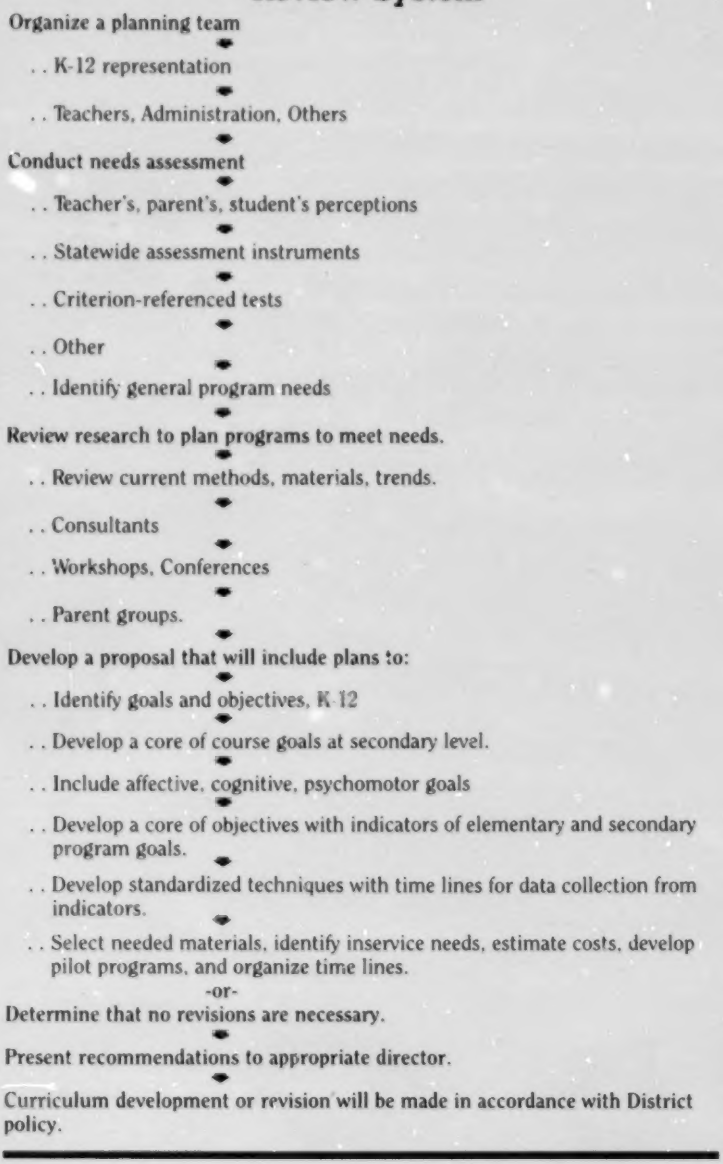
Looking at Results

Verification of learning generally takes a number of different forms, including teacher observation, criterion-referenced assessment, and standardized testing. Together, these elements of evaluation produce data that tell both building and district officials what percentage of students have successfully mastered each predetermined learning outcome.

Assessing individual student progress is only part of the picture, however, as Pringle points out. Data from the various elements of an evaluation program can help in making decisions about instruction and instructional materials. The data can specify the outcomes for each grade or course, or outline criteria set by the district to define "mastery." Evaluation data may clarify a need to revise teaching strategies or adjust learning requirements. Such decisions are more likely to be "correct" when based on solid data, rather than gut-level feelings.

Many districts that have implemented comprehensive instructional management programs include systematic curriculum review as an integral part of that program. For example, the Roseville, Minnesota, Area Schools, have established a discipline-by-discipline curriculum review cycle. The core subjects of language arts, social studies, mathematics, and science are reviewed regularly every five years, using needs assessments and collected performance data. Other subjects—such as foreign languages, health, business, and art—are reviewed every six years, as are special education, guidance, and other special programs, such as cooperative work experience plans. The Roseville system for program review is shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3
The Roseville Area Schools' Program Review System


Organize a planning team
. . K-12 representation
. . Teachers, Administration, Others
Conduct needs assessment
. . Teacher's, parent's, student's perceptions
. . Statewide assessment instruments
. . Criterion-referenced tests
. . Other
. . Identify general program needs
Review research to plan programs to meet needs.
. . Review current methods, materials, trends.
. . Consultants
. . Workshops, Conferences
. . Parent groups.
Develop a proposal that will include plans to:
. . Identify goals and objectives, K-12
. . Develop a core of course goals at secondary level.
. . Include affective, cognitive, psychomotor goals
. . Develop a core of objectives with indicators of elementary and secondary program goals.
. . Develop standardized techniques with time lines for data collection from indicators.
. . Select needed materials, identify inservice needs, estimate costs, develop pilot programs, and organize time lines.
-or-
Determine that no revisions are necessary.
Present recommendations to appropriate director.
Curriculum development or revision will be made in accordance with District policy.

When learning outcomes, rather than routine scheduling, are the basic operating principles of a school district, a district's management plan must of necessity be firmly based on data validating those outcomes. Both short and long-range plans are backed up by facts and figures that show how well the district is achieving its stated goals and, if necessary, where changes must be made in order to do better. That's what makes an instructional management program effective.

Summary

Steps in the planning process include: an examination of motives for change and commitment to systematic planning; allowing for a pre-planning period; determining who will make decisions; preparing the planning team; establishing definitions and clarifying philosophy and beliefs; obtaining top level commitment to the philosophy; developing the overall direction and essential components of the planning effort, including timeline, review, and evaluation.

CHAPTER 3
ASSESSING INSTRUCTIONAL NEEDS

Change is a constant that creates new needs and demands upon schools. Educators encourage change in students under their supervision and that change is called learning. Good school systems, as with all other quality organizations, must plan on the basis of meeting the needs of those they serve. Accepted as a fact of organizational theory is that unmet needs erode the effectiveness of an organization. An institution can disintegrate swiftly, decompose gradually, or just drift aimlessly without addressing its needs.

Glenys Unruh, former deputy superintendent in University City, Missouri, wrote in a 1976 issue of *Educational Leadership* that ". . . prior to involvement in making major decisions, it is necessary to identify needs and concerns through some systematic way of involving a diverse constituency. Once the needs and concerns have been identified, listed, and sorted into personal concerns, institutional concerns, and societal concerns that affect the school, priorities can be assigned."

Although instructional management models vary from school district to school district, administrators deeply involved with these models agree that a needs assessment should be done early in the process. A needs assessment is an organized attempt at making informed decisions about needs and the most productive order in which to tackle them. Besides determining which disciplines to involve first in instructional management, school administrators also use an assessment to: diagnose specific strengths and weaknesses for a single subject; measure school climate, attitudes, and morale; and appraise management practices. This chapter contains examples for these major uses of needs assessments.

A Generic Needs Assessment Process

Comprehensive review of professional literature leads to an inescapable conclusion—needs assessments are defined and conducted

quite differently. In practice, educators call almost any survey a needs assessment. What follows is a generic process which can and should be modified to plug into an existing or new instructional management system. Although the emphasis is on curricular and instructional issues, other areas could be assessed in a similar manner.

Needs assessments are formal processes for identifying discrepancies between expected and obtained results. Simply listing apparent needs in an organization easily produces a host of items too lengthy to be effectively managed. Needs assessment procedures narrow this field to a list of unmet needs placed in order of priority. The process involves documenting needs through the perceptions of interested parties, accumulating objective facts and data, or, ideally, using both objective and subjective data.

A need is defined as the difference between "what should be" and "what is." A goal is "what should be." Therefore, a need exists when a goal is not being met. Goals are often not clearly labeled as "goals." For example, the board of education's policies, the program of studies, administrative regulations, the superintendent's priorities, legislative mandates, municipal laws, and others, are often not labeled as goals. Often some of "what should be" has not been formally stated but traditionally functions as "unwritten rules" or what could be called assumed goals. Examples of some unwritten rules are: each school will have a student safety patrol; each employee will make contributions above and beyond a written job description; each principal will encourage parental volunteers; and many more. To put it another way, a need is the gap between what a goal prescribes and what the actual accomplishment describes. Figure 4 describes the relationship of these terms within the context of curriculum planning.

While each organizational unit or level may conduct a needs assessment that feeds into a master list of needs for the district, it is often more appropriate to begin with one assessment for the school district. This produces more consistency so that data collected from all sources are readily collated and synthesized. The aim is to harvest information that will provide guidance on where to start and how to design an effective instructional management program for a particular school system.

Figure 5 presents a planning outline of the steps generally involved in conducting a needs assessment.

Experience suggests that a representative cross section of the educational community—staff, parents, nonparents, and, for some areas, students—should participate in identifying the needs of the district. Values are important factors that determine what happens in public and private schools. A comprehensive assessment of needs

Figure 4
Curriculum Planning

Current Status
"What is"

Need
Gap between "what is" and "what should be"

Goal
Ideal state of "what should be"

Program
Treatment to move from current status toward goal

Objective
Acceptance state of "what should be"

Resources
What is required for a program to function.

The planning relationship using a reading example would be:

Planning for a specific reading need

Current Status
Fifteen percent of third graders are reading below grade level. (This is an example of needs assessment data)

Need
The number of third graders reading at or above grade level should be increased.

Goal
One hundred percent of third graders should be reading at or above grade level.

Program
The XYZ Instructional System for Reading will be implemented.

Objective
Ninety percent of third graders should be reading at or above grade level as shown on next year's testing results.

Resources
List of performance objectives; instructional guides; 60 minute per day study allocation per child, and so on

weighs those values and weaves them into a positive set of priorities. When needs are identified cooperatively, a sense of ownership occurs and the school system becomes more of a partnership.

More than Perceptions

A complete needs assessment would not rely solely on perceptions, except in rare instances. A full process buttresses perceived needs of the educational community with objective facts and data

Figure 5
Planning Outline for Conducting a Needs Assessment

Planner _____ Unit _____

Activities	Responsibility	Time Line	Completed
*Step I—Identify initial set of needs to assess			
A. List needs to assess			
*1. List the known needs			
2. Survey people informally regarding needs			
3. Collect and review possible sources of needs			
4. Use an existing list of relevant needs. Modify, if necessary			
5. Scan long-range needs			
*6. Confirm the relevance of each need to mission			
*B. Prepare needs for assessment			
1. Compile identified needs			
2. Confirm or reword to meet criteria for a need			
3. Eliminate those that are not feasible			
4. Analyze the range of needs			
5. Reduce to a manageable number			
6. Word for clarity			
7. Reference each need to a goal, policy, etc., or develop a rationale			
8. Complete the list of needs to assess			
9. Respond to persons suggesting initial needs.			
*Step II—Confirm needs to assess with supervisor (or the board of education)			
*Step III—Conduct the needs assessment			
*A. Determine what documentation exists for each need			

*Essential for all needs assessments

Activities	Responsibility	Time Line	Completed
1. Collect and review possible sources of data for information 2. Summarize relevant data for each need 3. Analyze the documentation to substantiate or refute each need 4. Refine statements of needs, if necessary 5. Determine if additional assessment should be done via perceptions of staff, students and/or the community			
B. Collect the perceived needs of clients and staff, as appropriate 1. Identify participants and selection procedures 2. Determine approach for collecting perceptions and analysis 3. Prepare for the collection of perceptions 4. Collect perceptions (a) ranking of importance (b) rating of attainment 5. Compare perceptions of importance and attainment 6. Summarize perceptual data with other documentation 7. Reach consensus on needs and their relative order of priority (optional)			
***Step IV—Put needs in priority and select needs to pursue**			
A. Combine and analyze documented data with perceptions collected in Step III B (unless completed)			
*B. List all needs in order of priority (unless completed)			
C. Select some of the highest priority needs as targets to resolve			
D. Complete indication of need for each targeted need			

*Essential for all needs assessments.

Activities	Responsibility	Time Line	Completed
**Step V—Establish tentative objectives with standards			
A. List constraints and determine ways to modify			
B. Establish tentative objectives with standards that when achieved will resolve targeted needs			
C. Modify the number of targeted needs, if necessary			
**Step VI—Review the priorities, needs, and objectives with supervisor (or the board of education)			
A. Reach consensus of priorities, needs, and objectives, if necessary			
B. Report priorities, needs, and objectives to staff, students, and the community			

**These latter two steps technically are not part of most needs assessment processes, although they are logical next steps in planning

such as standardized test scores or criterion-referenced test scores. Deliberate efforts should be made to pursue, through documentation, as close an approximation of reality as possible.

If perceptions of need do not match reality, the differences should be reconciled. Both standardized and criterion-referenced test scores may indicate students are doing well in a particular subject, but the public believes students are doing poorly. The problem is then one of communication or parents not accepting the curriculum, not that results are falling short.

Of course, the reasons for such attitudes could be poor school climate or morale. Moving toward an ideal almost always requires organizational change. If the organization is not healthy, sustained change is next to impossible. For that reason, some school administrators recommend formal assessment of school climate as a prerequisite in instituting any major redirection such as effective instructional management.

School Climate Assessment: Taking Your District's Pulse

How important is school climate? Some schools are comfortable, congenial places where individuals, no matter their position in school, feel like significant actors in the life of the institution. Other schools are more forbidding: students feel they are mere cogs in a bureaucratic wheel, and teachers have lost the enthusiasm and dedication of their calling and are simply "going through the motions" of instruction and classroom management.

School climate, although easy to discern, is complex to define precisely. Indeed, definitions of school climate can be as diverse as the people who create the climate. Unfortunately, educational literature too often pays lip service to the concept and glosses over the tangible factors that make up the less tangible "climate" of a school. A good deal of serious work has been done on the subject in the last decade. Especially valuable are materials such as those developed by CFK Ltd. and published by Phi Delta Kappa under the title *School Climate Improvement: A Challenge to the School Administrator*.

The CFK/PDK school climate materials provide step-by-step advice on assessing and improving the climate within an individual school or school system. Some 200 practicing school administrators who were involved in school climate improvement efforts contributed to the final PDK publication, which is practical, as well as theoretical.

What Makes Up a School's Climate?

The CFK/PDK materials describe school climate in terms of five factors:

1. Goals for the school's learning programs
2. Factors that comprise climate and determine its quality
3. Elements of a school's operation that contribute to a positive climate
4. Basic human needs that any school must address if it is to be a viable educational institution
5. Goals for an effective staff development program.

Using this definition as a foundation, the two primary goals of a humane school climate are *productivity* and *satisfaction*. Productivity means:

- Achieving basic skills
- Developing constructive attitudes

- Clarifying values and purposes
- Using inquiry and problem-solving processes.

Satisfaction is:

- Gaining a sense of personal worth
- Enjoying school as a pleasant place to live and work
- Gaining rewards from participation in worthwhile activities.

While these goals focus on students, a productive and satisfying environment for the school's adults—teachers, administrators, and parents—is also an important goal. Moreover, neither of these primary goals is sufficient without the other.

The CFK/PDK model of school climate proceeds from the primary goals of productivity and satisfaction to general climate factors such as: respect, trust, high morale, opportunities for input, continuous academic and social growth, cohesiveness, school renewal, and caring. These factors, which are not all-inclusive, should be considered in light of basic human needs. Among the essentials are *physiological needs*, such as heat and light; *safety needs*, or security against abuse or assault; *acceptance and friendship needs*; *achievement and recognition needs*; and the *need to maximize one's potential*.

Finally, the CFK/PDK school climate model includes a number of school climate determinants—"features of a school's operation that largely determine the quality of the factors and goals that comprise climate." Fox and his coauthors divide their 18 determinants (again, not all-inclusive) into three groups:

1. *Program determinants*, which include opportunities for active learning, individualized performance expectations, varied learning environments, flexible curriculum and extracurricular activities, support and structure appropriate to a learner's maturity, rules that are determined cooperatively, and varied reward systems that emphasize positive reinforcement.

2. *Process determinants*, which include problem-solving ability, improvement of school goals, identifying and working with conflicts, effective communications, involvement in decision making, autonomy with accountability, effective teacher-learning strategies, and ability to plan for the future.

3. *Material determinants*, which include adequate resources, a supportive and efficient logistical system, and suitability of the school plant.

To employ a school climate model productively, the school or district must develop a profile that clearly identifies areas in need of improvement, and second serves as a benchmark for measuring climate. Fox and his coauthors constructed such a profile as a four-part questionnaire that takes from 20 to 25 minutes to complete. Each part deals with a major component of their model:

general climate factors, program determinants, process determinants, and material determinants. Under headings that correspond to the items listed in the model, their profile contains a total of 130 statements that are to be rated "almost never," "occasionally," "frequently," or "almost always." A two-track answer space is provided—one column headed "What Is," and the other, "What Should Be."

A variety of people—students, parents, teachers, other staff members, building administrators, and central office administrators—should be involved in the rating. Resulting data can be analyzed to show which school climate factors rank highest and which rank lowest and what the spread is between "What Is" and "What Should Be." When there is a large discrepancy between "What Is" and "What Should Be," it is worthwhile to look for a reason.

By analyzing school climate first, a building or central office administrator is able to fix on areas where change is needed. "School climate cannot be left to chance," says Johnson City, New York, Superintendent Albert Mamary, who, in his former position of assistant superintendent, worked with CFK Ltd. in developing the school climate improvement program and now uses the CFK/PDK materials in his district.

Conducting an Educational Performance Audit

Another approach to assessing school or district needs is the external audit, which looks beyond the school's climate to its performance. Like the external financial audit in business and industry, these educational audits are conducted by outside investigators who can be objective and are not part of a district's hierarchy. Because they have no personal investment in the existing educational program, these investigators can fairly and independently assess a school district's performance against its own standards and objectives.

One form of audit, the Educational Performance Audit (EPA), was developed by the management firm of Peat, Marwick, Mitchell & Co. This EPA has been used in a number of school districts across the nation, including diverse communities such as Long Branch, New Jersey, and the Bellflower Unified School District in Southern California.

Long Branch, a former seaside resort, is now a bedroom town for New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore, while Bellflower is a product of Southern California's 1950s suburban boom. "Despite the basic differences in their histories and growth patterns, they

Key Questions Reveal Sound Management Control

Policies

1. The local board has developed and adopted a thorough policy framework for effective management control by calling for integrating learning objectives, curriculum development, and test information use by the staff.
2. Policies are followed by the administration and regularly reported to the board at public meetings.
3. Policies adhere to state laws and regulations.

Curriculum

1. Curriculum guides indicate clear objectives for teachers by grade level and indicate the desired time to be spent on each.
2. Curriculum guides have been keyed to the testing program and to textbook adoption.
3. Curriculum guides exist for all areas of the curriculum, are available to all teachers, and have been officially adopted for use by the local board.

Testing

1. The testing program has been adopted because of its adherence to local educational objectives.
2. Test data are regularly and publicly reported in an understandable manner.
3. Test data are regularly used in program and classroom planning.
4. Areas of the curriculum not subjected to testing are regularly assessed by some other reliable method and are publicly reported.

Teaching

1. Teacher adherence to the district's locally validated curriculum is regularly monitored.
2. Teachers use test data in planning the educational program.
3. Pupil achievement is considered a very important aspect of assessing teacher performance and it is built into the evaluation procedure.

Planning

1. The planning process shows evidence of the necessity to establish, maintain, and improve management control.
2. The plans developed by the district are clear, regularly reviewed, and monitored by the board of education, and they are used to evaluate administrative performance.
3. Plans covering three to five years are used, and they include key strategic problems that must be confronted by the district.
4. The planning process is considered part of the budgeting cycle.

Source: Fenwick W. English, "Management Planning Pinpoints Schools' Problems," *Peat Marwick Management Focus*, September-October 1981, p. 36.

have been faced with similar problems in education," says Fenwick W. English, formerly with Peat Marwick and now a superintendent in Long Island, New York. Indications that an audit was needed included declining enrollment and school closings, changing population patterns, severe budget problems, and "unsettling community politics."

An educational performance audit, according to English, "stresses the importance of integrated management control for ensuring the effective and efficient use of all resources to reach a district's established goals." As he explains, the auditors do not judge a district's goals nor do they impose notions of what the objectives should be; rather, they collect data from written records and documents, interview key administrators, and conduct on-site visits to build a picture of how well the district is living up to its own goals.

The assumption behind an audit is that there are operational links between the three major elements of schooling:

1. *Learner standards,* statements of what students are expected to learn, which are usually spelled out in curriculum guides and board policies
2. *Teaching* that translates learning objectives into student achievement
3. *Learner assessment* that gauges the students' proficiency in subject areas and learning objectives.

"In other words," says English, "what you teach is what you test is what you *should* teach. In many districts all three of these elements exist but there is no operational linkage from one to the next. That's what the EPA looks for, and there's no way to fake it."

In Long Branch and Bellflower, five standards were used in performing the audits:

1. The school district is able to demonstrate its control of resources, programs, and personnel.
2. The school district has established clear and valid objectives for students.
3. The school district has documentation explaining how its programs have been developed, implemented, and conducted.
4. The school district uses assessment results designed or adopted to adjust, improve, or terminate ineffective practices or programs.
5. The school district has been able to improve productivity.

The purpose of the audit, says English, is to identify shortcomings thereby stimulating improvements. In both of these districts, despite outward differences, the audit revealed similar problems:

- Both districts had trouble planning for more than one year in advance.

- Neither related specific learner standards to test results nor linked curriculum development to clearly stated learner objectives and teacher performance.
- Neither used test information in planning and budget development.

As a result of the audit, both districts have set up detailed instructional management plans that include comprehensive curriculum development and review.

"We control curriculum through content, time, and sequence—or at least we *think* we do," comments English. "But in most school districts, there are two kinds of curriculum: the one in the classroom and the one in the curriculum guide, and they're not necessarily the same. The only curriculum the learner ever knows is the one the teacher teaches.

"Carefully developed, clearly stated goals and objectives are crucial," he adds. "If you don't know where you're going, any curriculum will get you there. You have to focus on outcomes. When you're firm on outcomes, you can be pretty sure about what will take you there and pretty discriminating about the stuff that doesn't help."

A needs assessment can strip away false perceptions or reduce confusion so that schools can deal with reality. In essence, a needs assessment enables school administrators to take a snapshot of the school system and establish goals based on what comes out as "underdeveloped."

Summary

Planning for instructional management begins with a needs assessment—a formal process for identifying discrepancies between expected and obtained results. This diagnosis may be made of subject areas, school climate, attitudes, morale, or management practices. After needs are determined, they should be placed in priority and specific goals and objectives set to correct deficiencies.

A number of model needs assessments are available, including the Kettering Foundation school climate materials and the Educational Performance Audit developed by Peat, Marwick, Mitchell & Co. Other audits are conducted by individual firms or teams. Whatever approach is used, the needs assessment should identify areas needing improvement as a preliminary step.

CHAPTER 4
CASE STUDIES: THEORY TO PRACTICE

Despite the recent doom-and-gloom media treatment of public schools, many school systems across the country are improving programs and raising student achievement levels. What is even more noteworthy about this phenomenon is that this upward trend is occurring without adequate financial resources. Instead of bemoaning the lack of money, many school administrators have plunged ahead to enhance instruction with unmistakable results. These school districts are applying comprehensive management planning to delivery of instructional services. They may use varying modes of instructional management, but they have in common a strong commitment to excellence in education, a clear sense of mission, and a focus on their end product—actively learning students.

This chapter focuses on examples of such systems—Roseville, Minnesota; Johnson City, New York; Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Glendale Union High School District, Glendale, Arizona; and Adams County School District No. 12, Northglenn, Colorado. These districts are representative of the many districts across the nation that are working to improve programs and raise student achievement levels. The case studies of these districts describe the impetus for developing an instructional management plan, the operation of the plan, and the results. Additional details of these and other instructional management plans are featured throughout this book.

Case Study: Roseville, Minnesota

Like many other suburban school districts in the Northeast and North Central United States, Roseville, Minnesota, has faced the twin problems of declining enrollments and big budget cuts. In the last decade, according to Richard Wakefield, Roseville's co-

ordinator of program planning, the district's enrollment plummeted from 14,000 to 7,500. Budget cuts were so severe—well over $1 million in 1981-82 alone—that teachers with 10 to 15 years in the classroom faced "pink slips."

Left with severely diminished resources, sinking morale, and a maturing staff, Roseville decided to assess how well the district was doing and what could be done better with fewer resources. "We didn't have a strong system of goals and objectives for separate courses of study," says Wakefield. "Course goals were subtly different from school to school, and we were not measuring our achievement of district goals as carefully as we could have."

Preparation

The Roseville district developed a three-step system of goals, objectives, and indicators for measuring student achievement on each objective and goal. The first step was to re-examine the district's general goals—global statements of purpose—and list them by order of priority.

Next, the district handpicked a group of teachers and hired them over the summer to write goals, objectives, and indicators for each subject area and each course. The formats for these statements were the same from subject to subject, course to course, and school to school, and all were cross-referenced. For example, in mathematics, the district's general goal was to "help each student learn the skills of mathematics." That general goal breaks down into six more specific ones, the first of which reads: "The student will learn the basic computational skills of mathematics."

In turn, these six goals are made more specific for each grade level or course, and objectives are written for each goal. For example, the first goal of fifth-grade mathematics is that the student "will develop an understanding of basic concepts of numbers and numerals relating to whole numbers."

The objective for this goal is that by the end of the school year, 80 percent of the students will respond correctly on 75 percent or more of test items relating to specified learning objectives, such as knowing concepts, symbols, and place value through the millions.

The indicator for this particular objective, or yardstick for measuring student mastery of it, is the district's fifth-grade math test. Indicators for other objectives are a balanced mix of objective tests and teacher judgment.

Other Reasons for Success

In addition to developing goals, objectives, and indicators for the district's entire instructional program, two other factors make Roseville's instructional management system successful: staff development and program review.

When the process began four years ago, the first topic for inservice training was writing goals and objectives. Now inservice training concentrates on learning styles, outcome-based education, effective teaching strategies, and computer-managed evaluation and diagnosis. At the urging of the teachers' union, the district provides a staff development reward system of providing teachers academic credit or extra pay for inservice work.

Curriculum Review

"When we began the process," says Wakefield, "we discovered a discrepancy between the written and the real—between the goals and objectives we developed and the day-to-day reality of the classroom." To close that gap, Roseville instituted a system of regular curriculum review of each subject area on a regular five- or six-year cycle. Reviews are based on performance data collected and analyzed prior to its distribution to the Roseville staff and the school board.

These reports show teachers exactly how well their students have done on mastering each goal and point out any problems with the goals themselves. Goals and objectives are then revised as necessary. "The second time around," Wakefield reports, "the goals are more specific and realistic."

From Reluctance to Enthusiasm

How did Roseville's teachers and administrators respond to the new instructional management system? "There was some reluctance at first, according to Wakefield. "We encountered some resistance from teachers who were afraid the goals and objectives would be used as instruments to check their performance," he says. "Once they realized that was not what we were after, they began to help test the objectives in actual instruction. They saw that the program really worked. Staff development and data collection made the difference."

Like the teachers, not all the principals in the system were immediately enthusiastic either. Ironically, however, it was budget cuts that led to their eventual involvement. As Wakefield explains: "Some of the principals were reluctant at first. But when cutbacks meant we had to reduce the number of department chairpersons in the high schools, the principals found themselves absorbing more instructional responsibility. As a result, they became much more supportive and involved in the instructional management system."

Roseville has traditionally scored well on national standardized tests, according to Wakefield, but until the instructional management program began, the system lacked consistent internal baseline data on student achievement. "Despite good SAT scores, the public still had a pretty negative perception of how well the schools were doing," says Wakefield. "We were facing accountability pressures from the community, along with the challenge to improve instruction and generate enthusiasm in a district beset with financial problems. Now we have a system that allows us to monitor our progress very carefully—and present measurable results in reports to the board and parents."

Case Study: Johnson City, New York

When John Champlin agreed to accept the Johnson City superintendency, it was on condition that he have community approval to make major changes in the district's education program. To obtain approval, he invited contingents of teachers and parents to visit the district where he was then superintendent, and then he set up an informal group of 14 educators and citizens to serve as ombudsmen for him and the community.

The Johnson City community is a factory town of some 28,000 near Binghamton in upstate New York. In the 19th century it became home for large numbers of European immigrants who brought with them a strong work ethic and a belief that the schools would Americanize their children, preparing them to take their places in the workforce. "It was not a particularly academically-oriented community," Champlin recalls, yet throughout his tenure there, he won local support for important revisions in the district's instructional program.

"We didn't challenge the community," says Champlin. "We renormed it. And we did that by having a 150-person task force spend six weeks studying educational and societal trends to determine where the schools should be and where they were then. The task

force ended up saying, 'We want our schools organized according to what we know about how children learn—not according to tradition or convenience.'"

With that mandate, Champlin developed a mastery- and outcome-based instructional program with a solid basis in research. Champlin divides the process of setting up such a program into four continuous and overlapping phases: readiness, pre-entry, operational, and renewal/evaluation:

- *Readiness.* Getting ready begins with developing a philosophical statement of commitment and establishing a data base to serve as a screen for decision making. "Many instructional decisions are made out of habit, tradition, or folklore," Champlin says. "We needed to legitimize those decisions, so we looked at the literature to find out what we know about such topics as learning time, curriculum, assessment, and teaching and learning styles. Then we tried to match research findings to practice. We found we were practicing discrepancy management—trying to close the gap between research and practice."

The literature used to develop Johnson City's decision-making screen included the work of Benjamin Bloom, Madeline Hunter, Sidney Simon, William Glasser, Lorin Anderson, and the Beginning Teacher Evaluation Study. Champlin and his staff then compiled position statements on key learning and management issues and checked any decisions against these statements on what the literature said about that particular activity or area.

The Johnson City team also established a rationale and procedure for staff development and conducted an analysis that zeroed in on specifics of who would do what and when. Disavowing traditional stereotypes of teacher-administrator roles was necessary according to Champlin.

- *Pre-entry.* After the readiness phase—Johnson City identified the specific skills and talents required to implement the program and then held staff training sessions. The only additional cost of Johnson City's program, Champlin stresses, was the $10,000 allocated to hire substitute teachers so that regular teachers could attend sessions during the school day.

During the pre-entry phase, Champlin and his staff also established a problem-solving procedure for the entire professional staff to use and drew up a glossary of educational terms essential to the mastery/outcome-based program.

- *Operational.* "After the first two phases, you're actually living it," says Champlin. "You've anticipated most of the problems that will arise and you're applying what you've learned in daily work." During the operational phase, the district was involved in process

rather than planning. Also, because Johnson City began its program in the elementary schools and then extended it through high school, the phases of implementation were constantly overlapping.

- *Renewal/evaluation.* Not an end point but a constant part of the program, the renewal/evaluation phase encompasses feedback, correction, and adjustments to the entire program, as well as student assessment. "We applied the same principle of mastery to ourselves as we applied to the students," explains Champlin. "Instead of the traditional line-staff evaluation, we developed collegial problem solving, reassessment, and renewal."

Results

Not only have test scores improved but, also as Champlin puts it, "More students are now doing better—not just the top students." In addition Champlin found that learning actually accelerates as students stay with the system.

Staff morale is also good in Johnson City. "Burnout comes when teachers no longer believe they can make a difference," says Champlin. "With our approach, teachers saw that they did make a difference in instructional outcomes. Moreover, they saw their roles evolve from the traditional imparter of information to a role of diagnosis, process, and prescription."

An important ingredient in the Johnson City experience has been the leadership of the superintendent. "Most administrators are managers," says Champlin. "They put a premium on efficiency, not on instruction. Making a program like ours work requires effective leadership behavior and the ability to create a climate conducive to instructional program development." (John Champlin was honored with AASA's 1982 Leadership for Learning Award for his outstanding educational leadership in Johnson City.)

School climate is a primary concern of Champlin's successor, Albert Mamary, who worked closely with Champlin in developing and implementing the district's instructional management program before taking over the reins of the system. "Our major contribution has been to develop an instructional model that takes theory and puts it into practice," says Mamary. "In addition to curriculum and instruction, we're now looking at other major components, such as school climate. We are talking about respect, caring, trust—and what evidence we have that we are really demonstrating these traits. The real payoff of instructional management is in what takes place in the classroom between teachers and students."

Case Study: Milwaukee Public Schools, Wisconsin

No stranger to desegregation orders, enrollment decline, and the issue of low achieving students, Milwaukee has emerged with a record of considerable success.

In 1979 the Milwaukee Board of Education approved a recommendation that one of superintendent Lee McMurrin's goals be to address the problem of 18 elementary and 2 middle schools where a large percentage of students were performing poorly on reading, mathematics, and language arts tests. These schools, identified by the central office, became part of Project RISE. In 1979-80, slated to be the year for planning and inservice activities, principals and faculties were provided guidance in generating strategies aimed at achieving elements of effective schools. In 1980-81 they were then asked to prepare school improvement plans along the lines of the effective schools studies. That year also the district formed an Effective Schools Committee to promote the concept both within and beyond the RISE schools. The "essential elements" of the RISE plans encompass:

- *School climate*: strong sense of academic mission; high expectations conveyed to all students; strong sense of identification/affiliation among students; ongoing recognition of personal academic excellence.
- *Curriculum*: grade-level expectations in reading, mathematics, and language arts; planning and monitoring for full content coverage; use of the accelerated curriculum (planning for more than one year's growth).
- *Instruction*: efficient classroom management through structured learning environment; key instructional behaviors (homework check, developmental lessons, process/product check, active monitoring of seatwork, and the assignment of related homework); direct instruction as the main pedagogical approach for basic skills; increased instructional time allocated to high-priority subjects; maximized academic engaged time; reading, mathematics, and language arts instruction beginning in kindergarten.
- *Coordination of support services*: instructional approach, curriculum content, and materials of supplementary instructional services coordinated with classroom program; pull-out approach used only if it does not fragment classroom instructional programs, does not result in lower expectations for some students, does not interfere with the efforts to increase academic engaged time, and

does not reduce the amount of time allocated to that subject in the regular classroom.

- *Evaluation*: frequent and regular assessment of student progress; precise and informative report card with emphasis on acquisition of basic skills; serious attitude toward test taking as an affirmation of individual accomplishment; teaching of test preparation and test-taking skills.
- *Parent and community support*: regular and consistent communication with parents; clearly defined homework policy for parents and students; emphasis on importance of school attendance; increased awareness of community services available to reinforce and extend students' academic programs.

With the heavy emphasis on monitoring and evaluation, RISE schools receive strong central office support. Curriculum specialists regularly visit these schools and each month hold half-day meetings with the principals. A professor from the University of Wisconsin offers outside support. A team of at least three central office administrators periodically visits each RISE school to meet with the principal for evaluation and to generate ideas for improvements.

Results

According to McMurrin, the positive successes to date of the RISE project are that:

- A program of successful instructional techniques has been implemented as a major part of the plan for change.
- All principals spend more time on matters of instruction and support for staff in school effectiveness endeavors.
- Each school measures success of ongoing activities and pupil performance.
- Standardized tests reflect a growing number of students achieving at or above grade level in reading and math.

Given that RISE has only been operating in the implementation stage for a couple of years and in the most difficult schools, the results are impressive. Although many aspects of the RISE program may become normal fare in other Milwaukee schools in the future, McMurrin does not intend to impose RISE on schools that are already high achieving. Only those elements of RISE that are appropriate will be grafted onto other programs. Nevertheless, it seems clear that effective instructional management, as designed and employed in Milwaukee, has a good chance for sustaining the upgrading of student learning in inner-city schools.

Case Study: Glendale Union High School District Glendale, Arizona

When the Glendale Union High School District hired a new superintendent (Gerald George's predecessor) it was with the mandate that a comprehensive accountability system be established. As the district's "in-house expert," George was put in charge of the effort. "Schools are a nonprofit institution," says George. "All the people get a raise whether they produce or not. We needed a system that would hold us accountable for educational results, and for that we needed commitment from not just the superintendent and the board, but from the community as well."

Glendale Union serves a large community—the city of Glendale, plus northwestern Phoenix, Arizona. Glendale Union is one of three separate and independent school districts serving the area. There are two elementary school feeder districts to Glendale Union, which consists of ten high schools with a total student population of 15,000 in grades nine through twelve.

"Accountability means asking yourself three questions," says George. "First, what do the district's many publics—including parents, patrons, students, and educators—desire in terms of learner performance? Second, how effective are the schools in bringing about the desired learner performance? And finally, if the schools are not as effective as desired, what should we be doing instead?"

These questions form the basis for Glendale's three-phase needs assessment:

- *Phase 1:* Determination of learner goal priorities (perceptions or concerns of various populations served by the system)
- *Phase 2:* Identification of learner needs (validation of top priority goals identified in Phase 1)
- *Phase 3:* Establishment of related educational programs (revision or development of educational programs to eliminate unmet learner needs identified in Phase 2).

George's first step was to survey a sample of the population—parents, nonparents, business leaders, and representatives of the news media, along with students, teachers, administrators, and other district staff. Included in the sample were staff members from the two elementary school feeder districts.

The focus of the survey was the bottom-line question, "What should students learn?" In an analysis of 7,000 or so replies, George found that two answers topped the list: basic skills and citizenship. Also high on the list were principles of mental and physical health,

initial career plans, and positive self-image and attitude. Although there were some differences in rank order from group to group, the survey's overall results were a vote of confidence for Glendale Union. "We already had required courses in the areas the community felt were most important," says George.

Having identified priority learning goals, the district staff then divided each required course into instructional units and developed a goal statement and a terminal objective for each unit. The terminal objectives, or critical skills, were targeted not only to minimum achievement, as in many districts, but to average and above average achievement, as well.

Next, each objective was subjected to an instructional task analysis, a process of diagramming the skills, concepts, or capabilities that a student must learn in order to achieve the terminal skill or objective. Criterion-referenced test items were constructed, field-tested and revised for each objective, and instructional strategies specified.

Data from the criterion-referenced tests drives the Glendale management system and lays the foundation for improvement. Computer-generated class summary profiles give teachers a student-by-student rundown of scores on individual pre- and post-tests, total test mean scores for each student, and mean number of skills each student has achieved. The same profile gives class totals and comparative scores for the school and the district.

Student achievement profiles arranged by teacher or class give principals a check on how the students in each section are doing when measured against total school and district scores. Similarly, the board of education receives printouts that give school-by-school results on the criterion-referenced tests, showing any gain or loss over the previous year's results.

Relieving Teacher Concerns

Are teachers in Glendale Union evaluated on the basis of test results? "That's a question I heard a lot when we first started," admits George. "The answer is no, the results don't go into the teacher's formal evaluation file. But the principal does use an individual teacher's test scores when it comes to observation and supervision and in developing improvement plans for each teacher. Just as criterion-referenced tests help teachers spot areas where students need more work, they help principals spot staff development needs on the part of the teachers."

Teachers' initial anxieties on this subject generally evaporated as they began to see that the system gave them proof of their

classroom effectiveness. Instead of worrying about formal evaluation, they pointed with pride to the results of their work. In fact, a healthy competition has sprung up among teachers. When the system was instituted, the board of education's goal was to have teachers spend 75 percent of their time on objectives determined by the district. But now, reports George, teachers spend 80 to 90 percent of their time teaching to those objectives.

Additional Results

Another result of the system has been a strengthening of the principal's role as the school's educational leader. "We were also becoming aware of the importance of learning time," reports George. "When you're teaching to an objective, time on task does increase learning, but only up to a point. For the first three years, our test scores improved, but then they began to level off, and the principals wanted to know what was happening."

What was happening was that the staff needed additional work in areas such as instructional strategies, mastery learning, and clinical supervision. Outside consultants came in to work directly with teachers and principals and to train district staff to carry on that work. "I didn't think you could change the stripes on a tiger," says George, "but now most of the principals in the district spend anywhere from 25 to 50 percent of their time right there in the classroom."

Another positive spin-off of the program has been increased communications with the public—including educators at the elementary level. "Our feeder schools are administering the high school pretests and reporting the results for each school," says George, "and we are now issuing regular update reports to the public through the board of education." Glendale Union is currently developing a second community survey on the issues of discipline, sex education, and support services such as counseling. The district is also gearing up for a comprehensive curriculum review, looking primarily at its 260 electives. "Do they really support the required courses, or are they detracting from them?" asks George. "We currently offer all kinds of electives. Some of them, I suspect, won't be around in the future."

What will be around is the Glendale system itself, which George describes as being based on the three pillars of curriculum, instruction, and evaluation. In management terms, according to George, curriculum translates into developing goals and objectives for learning, or *planning*. Instruction translates into improving teacher competency on the basis of identified student needs, or

implementation. Evaluation translates into developing sophisticated pre- and post-tests and using them for diagnosing and prescription, or *decision making*.

Case Study: Adams County, School District No. 12 Northglenn, Colorado

In 1972, George Bailey was a man with an idea. "If education is to retain any credibility with the general public," he believed, "we must define clearly what students should know in terms of instructional objectives, and we must make those objectives public and measurable." Armed with that conviction, Bailey left the University of Wyoming in search of a school district where he could translate his beliefs into action.

He had previously served as superintendent of schools in a state capitol city, where he found a "pyramid power structure" that concentrated decision making in the hands of a few people who were not particulary responsive to change. Bailey knew that to do anything significant in education, changes were necessary, so he began looking for a suburban community where the power was more evenly distributed among a younger population. He knew that a match between superintendent, board, and district was crucial for the superintendent to have a real impact on the direction of the schools, and felt such a match was more possible in a suburban district.

Bailey found what he was looking for in Adams County, School District No. 12, Northglenn, Colorado—a 29-school, 18,500-student district, gearing up to write instructional objectives in response to a Colorado school accountability law adopted in 1971. But like many large districts, the Adams County schools were fragmented in focus. According to a profile of the district published by the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, Adams County faced common problems:

- There was no clear statement of organizational mission
- The district's goals were extremely broad
- There were no long-range and few short-range goals
- Although up to 100 instructional objectives had been written in each subject for each grade level in response to the accountability law, few of them were terminal objectives
- Student assessment was not tied to the objectives but instead was tied to standardized tests comparing performance to national norms.

Working with the board of education, Bailey spearheaded two major agendas for change:

- Apply the principles of management-by-objectives (MBO) to the district's organizational structure
- Implement objectives-based mastery learning in the instructional program.

"We started with management and leadership issues, not the instructional process," says Bailey, "with the aim of working back to instruction."

The first step, a key to the MBO approach, was a clear definition of organizational goals. According to MBO theory, the more clearly goals are known, the more likely they will be achieved; moreover, change increases when it can be measured against clearly defined goals.

In 1973, the board of education adopted districtwide educational goals that translated Adams County's historically vague goals into measurable and observable terms. At the same time, a master plan was drawn up for implementing districtwide objectives-based instruction. For the next two years, teams of teachers and administrators worked to clarify course objectives in basic skills and to develop and pilot-test criterion-referenced tests. Parents and students helped determine critical needs during this development process.

To initiate the management-by-objectives structure, Bailey and the board drew up a contractual agreement defining performance objectives for the superintendent in terms of the district's educational objectives. The same approach was used at all levels of district structure. Personnel roles were defined for nearly all instructional employees and specific job descriptions drawn up. Responsibilities and performance expectations for all district personnel were tied to meeting district objectives for student achievement, and staff performance was monitored and evaluated quarterly.

Resource allocation was tied to MBO through the building level master plan developed each year by the principal and staff in each building. Individual, departmental, and building objectives were set for the coming year in the areas of student achievement, student citizenship, organizational health, and resource management. These objectives became "predictions" of expected performance, and the entire staff, involved in developing the building master plan, became committed to the plan.

Once all schools in the district completed their master plans, tentative goals were set by the board and confirmed as districtwide priorities with resources allocated on the basis of these priorities. "We tell the principals, 'If you want your resource allocations,

we're going to have to see your master plan,'" explains Bailey. "And I'm convinced that if I had it all to do over again, I'd start with the building master plan. If people are really involved in goal setting, their achievement can be just out of this world."

Results

Adams County's MBO and objectives-based instructional approaches coalesced over a few years into an instructional management system called Predictable Learner Mastery. The system integrates the elements of mastery learning with seven organizational and instructional management components:

- Publicly stated, districtwide educational goals that are based on research and developed through participation of all involved
- An objectives-based curriculum with clearly defined and sequenced objectives, clearly defined requisite entry level skills, and use of criterion-referenced assessment
- Regular prediction of the number of students who can reasonably be expected to attain mastery each year in each subject at the district, building, and classroom levels
- Diagnostic/prescriptive instruction that allows for flexible time and learning styles, is presented in a student-focused climate, and provides feedback to students on their progress
- A comprehensive staff development program tied to district priorities with emphasis on clinical supervision and diagnostic/prescriptive instruction
- Management and budgeting that includes objectives-based long- and short-range planning, participative decision making, and use of resources to assist student achievement
- An information and reporting system that validates and records student performance and progress toward learning objectives.

A valuable feature of this system is the "objectives" report card piloted in some Adams County schools. The report card lists district objectives in reading and mathematics and indicates which objectives the student has mastered, which have been introduced but not yet mastered, and which have not yet been introduced. Students may demonstrate and receive credit for improved performance at any time, and that credit will be reflected on the report card at the next reporting time.

A radical departure from the traditional report card, this system initially required careful explanation to parents. "But when the schools took the time to introduce the new reporting system to small groups of parents, there was 100 percent acceptance," says Bailey.

The Predictable Learner Mastery system harmonizes so well with other aspects of the district's management and budgeting practices, that knowledge of and experience with instructional management systems were the major criteria in the selection of a superintendent to replace Bailey upon his retirement. It wasn't just the board of education which established this as a qualification for an incoming superintendent, but parents, teachers, other administrators, and students, as well.

Summary

School districts that have implemented successful instructional management systems share the conviction that almost all students *can* succeed—that is, achieve desired learning outcomes—when conditions are right. They share the conviction that the instructional process *can* be changed to improve learning. Regardless of the exact definition and methods of implementation, effective instructional management systems proceed from these basic premises. For that reason, most successful instructional management systems:

- Use sound research on what is known about how students learn
- Establish publicly agreed on educational goals and assess what is needed in order to achieve those goals
- Set up clearly stated learning objectives or desired outcomes
- Make use of a criterion-referenced assessment system that documents student attainment of specific learning objectives
- Employ a systematic process for planning and providing instruction that is appropriate to each student and that engages the student until learning outcomes are attained
- Make opportunities available for staff training, particularly in the areas of using goals and objectives, developing criterion-referenced test items, understanding mastery learning, addressing teaching and learning styles, and using clinical supervision
- Include an information management system that enables teachers and administrators to coordinate instructional planning and delivery, student assessment and placement, and program evaluation
- Include a systematic program review and evaluation component that allows for continued change and improvement
- Result in educational accountability as a goal of the management system.

Effective instructional management plans have one other important feature in common—the committed leadership of a top

school executive, most often the superintendent. "The role of the superintendent is up for grabs," says John Champlin. "Leadership is the opposite of maintenance. When it comes to managing change, the superintendent who is a risk taker, a model, an enabler, is the one who can make it go."

CHAPTER 5
LEADERSHIP: AN ESSENTIAL INGREDIENT

Setting up an effective instructional management program—or coalescing existing elements of such a program into a systematic whole—is a major undertaking for any school district. Often, an instructional management program literally "turns the district around," and when that happens, public attention focuses on the results rather than on the strong, committed leadership that made it possible. Even when the initial spark or explosion for change comes from outside the school district, local leadership is indispensable for productive follow-up and classroom applications.

In most cases, the superintendent exhibits the leadership, and while that is where leadership for effective instructional management often begins, that is, by no means, where it ends. School board members, instructional supervisors, curriculum developers, public relations officers, building principals, teachers—all have leadership roles to play. Ron Edmonds and others associated with the effective schools research have cited strong leadership at the school level as one, if not the, key characteristic of instructionally effective schools (*Phi Delta Kappan*, 1983). In most situations this translates into a dynamic principal, although it is conceivable that leadership could emerge from a few persuasive instructors or a "critical mass" of teachers. Ideally, leadership endorsing effective instructional management permeates the organization at every position and angle.

Leadership for Change

Leadership is one of the processes responsible for moving a school or a school district toward increased student achievement. Leadership cannot be pushed through the schoolhouse doors and dropped off at the principal's office like a new set of textbooks. It is not a commodity easily packaged and shipped around the district.

Some people just "have it" and others need to be trained before they "get it." So far, our emphasis has been on democratic leadership that involves participants, builds a team, and raises morale while promoting positive school climate. This emphasis proposes that the methods schools use to convert to instructional management determine the initial receptivity and long range acceptance of the change.

This view of organizational change assumes that education is a "loosely coupled organization," and successful transformations take advantage of the uniqueness of local situations. There are other viewpoints, however, which can also get the job done.

In complex organizations change does not come easily. Tradition indicates that it takes nearly 50 years to effect significant change in education. The larger world, however, undergoes mutations so rapidly that many times we can't afford to wait 50 years to close a cultural gap. This was superintendent George Bailey's conclusion when he investigated strategies to bring about the kinds of educational changes he wanted to see in the Northglenn, Colorado, public schools. Traditionally, organizational change first provides people with knowledge and information about the desired change, Bailey explains. The new knowledge and information brings changes in attitude, fo"owed by changes in individual behavior, and finally, changes in group behavior. Bailey calls this participatory model of change the "50-year cycle."

To bring about a faster educational change, Bailey used the directive model of change. "Directive change means someone at the top says we're going to do something, it's important, and it will start now," Bailey explains. "Let's call such action a prediction. Group and individual behavior change starts when the prediction is made. People growl and grumble but behavior starts to change, nevertheless."

It is at this point—when individuals begin to change their behavior in accord with the prediction—that training and knowledge about the desired change begin. The more they learn about the change, the more secure the people feel and the more their attitudes begin to evolve in the desired direction.

The directive model of change worked in Northglenn because of Bailey's leadership and commitment and it can work where top organizational officials take the initiative in making change, maintain the focus of the change, and work to develop a sense of cohesiveness and pride among all the members of the organization.

Forceful leadership makes the difference. "I believe in being proactive and acting like a winner," says Bailey. "We got our act together, and most of the administrators agreed on what we were doing most of the time. We try to accomplish everything in a first-

class manner, and we praise excellence and commend good performance on an almost daily basis. When you set high expectations, you usually get what you expect."

Other Approaches

Some administrators who have implemented effective instructional management programs recommend a different approach. Former Arlington, Virginia, superintendent Larry Cuban has identified a six-step approach. "A rough-hewn formula is emerging from the experiences of school districts, but it is conceptually simple—targeted like a sniper's single shot on boosting test scores." The six steps are:

1. The school board and the superintendent establish district-wide instructional goals, often stated in terms of student outcomes, for example, test score improvement.
2. A goal-setting process is constructed for each school and its classrooms. School and classroom goals deal with student outcomes; for example, they are aligned with district goals.
3. The district curriculum (K-12) is reviewed to determine whether the objectives for subject matter and skills, the textbooks, and the tests are consistent with what teachers teach in classrooms.
4. District supervisory practices and evaluation instruments used in schools and classrooms are revised in light of the focus on student outcomes and what the literature on effective teaching has produced; for example, evaluation of teachers and principals is linked to district and school objectives.
5. A monitoring process is mandated to assess progress in reaching district, school, and classroom goals. The information is used to determine program changes and to evaluate staff performance.
6. An extensive staff development program, set up for teachers, principals, central office supervisors, and the school board, concentrates on effective teaching, effective schools, and gradual implementations of the other five steps.

Cuban, in his article "Effective Schools: A Friendly But Cautionary Note," warns that while the above formula may work to raise test scores, it can lead to unanticipated trade-offs. He suggests that school administrators consider the question: "How can the broader, more complex, and less easily measured goals of schooling be achieved as we improve test results?" Otherwise, he fears that by using the effectiveness formula "Administrators have found a hammer to pound out a solution. . . ." and "Too often, however, those who believe that their only tool is a hammer treat everything as a nail. Such a narrow view can only disserve the children of the nation."

Leadership style is an intangible element of administration and there is no right or wrong standard that can be applied to every situation. Some school executives are directive in their approach, others are nondirective. Top-notch instructional management systems have been created under superintendents with a wide variety of leadership styles. The key in 99.99 percent of the successful implementation projects is that the superintendent took an active leadership role, regardless of personal style.

The Superintendent's Role: Making the Extra Effort

Because instructional management is generally best approached on a district rather than building basis, any discussion of leadership must begin with the superintendent. As chief executive and educational officer of a district, the superintendent must exhibit leadership characteristics simply to maintain the status quo and to keep the school system running as smoothly as possible from day to day. But a major reform in the system's goals and operations calls for extraordinary leadership abilities.

Implementing an outcome-based instructional management program such as the one in Johnson City requires "an obvious extra effort," according to former superintendent John Champlin. "That extra effort is often a constant test of one's professional dedication, management skills, technical understanding, and proficiencies, and—last but not least—a severe test of the willingness to re-examine one's own attitude and belief system."

Is that extra effort worth it? It is, Champlin believes, but only if the superintendent:

- Is dissatisfied with what the schools are doing compared to what they could be doing and is willing to challenge and revise his or her personal beliefs if necessary to make the schools more efficient and more effective.
- Believes that educational leadership requires activism, involvement, and ownership, and that professionalism is not possible unless practice reflects the best available data.
- Is tired of "fluff" and "catch" programs that sprout up and quickly fade away and also is increasingly impatient with such "killer phrases" as "It won't work," or "It's just a fad."
- Has the personal drive and dedication to stay with it, see it through, and make it go.
- Is willing to take risks, to create a high profile, and to stand apart from and above the reluctant.

Clearly, the superintendent must have a sound understanding of the instructional principles underlying the management program and must recognize that it takes time and effort to modify existing beliefs and practices in line with those principles. As Champlin puts it, implementing instructional improvement is an evolutionary, not a revolutionary, process.

Helping that evolution along requires that the superintendent serve as a model for the rest of the staff in re-examining traditional attitudes and beliefs. In addition, it requires a good communicator and a good motivator: a person who can not only explain the issues involved and deal thoughtfully with staff members' concerns, but can also generate enthusiasm among those who are initially apprehensive at the thought of major change.

These "people" skills must be combined with the management skills of planning, organizing, activating, and controlling. Because even the best manager runs up against unanticipated stumbling blocks, Champlin and others advise flexibility. "Nothing destroys a program like a crisis," says Champlin, "so try to anticipate and confront problems before they occur. In a nutshell, my advice is to plan, anticipate, implement, and renew—but don't expect to be right all the time."

A final, important aspect of leadership is the ability to involve subordinates meaningfully in planning and decision making. Establishing an atmosphere of trust and collegiality, always a leadership plus, is even more so when what is at stake is a management system that impacts on virtually all aspects of the district's educational program. Drawing on his or her leadership skills, a superintendent becomes a proponent of good teaching and an advocate of children.

Central Office Administrators: The Support Team

Providing the knowledge and resources to make an instructional management program a reality is the function of central office specialists in such areas as curriculum and instruction, staff development, and evaluation. It is their role to work with the superintendent, principals, and teachers to translate research into practice through:

- Setting realistic educational goals
- Designing appropriate curriculum and learning objectives
- Identifying effective instructional and supervisory strategies
- Providing staff development opportunities that meet the real needs of principals and teachers

- Developing a comprehensive, continuing system of student assessment and program and personnel evaluation.

In many school districts, it is the assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction who coordinates the district's instructional management program, looking to the superintendent and the school board for charismatic leadership and visible support and to other central office administrators and their staff members for performance of specific duties.

Among these, the communications administrator can play a key role—both in reporting the results of an instructional management system once it is under way, and, just as important, keeping all segments of the school community fully informed during the planning and start-up phases. Explaining complex issues in an easily understandable way makes the communications professional an obvious choice to provide communications counsel and prepare clear accurate presentations of information for various publics.

The size of the central office staff influences who and how many staff members are directly involved in the instructional management program. Some subject matter specialists, inservice planners, or instructional supervisors may devote most of their attention to this venture. Success hinges on as many as possible central office employees having a passing acquaintance, at least, with the basics of effective instructional management. The ultimate test is the degree to which a program can be explained to the average person on the street in a normal conversation.

Of course, in smaller school districts with less central administrative support, efforts may be led by only a few administrators and key staff members.

School Board and Community: Advise and Assist

Implementing an instructional management program will be an uphill job if the community and the school board are not fully behind it. Parents of public school students quite obviously have a vested interest in the quality of the local school's instructional program, but so, perhaps less obviously, do others in the community.

Local merchants and business people, for example, want to know that the public school graduates they hire will have the basic skills and attitudes they need to be adaptable and productive workers. Civic leaders need assurance that the coming generation of voters know the principles of the democratic process and have the ability to make discriminating decisions. Professionals in all fields—in-

cluding higher education—want to feel that the young people who will be joining their endeavors will be capable not only of carrying on the work, but of advancing it. In short, even though the population segment directly involved with the schools may be small, the entire community has a vital stake in public education.

This message must be communicated to the public at large and educators must actively seek the public's recommendations in setting a district's educational goals. In Glendale, Arizona, a community survey solicited public involvement in district goal setting; elsewhere, parents and other community members serve as volunteers on district planning teams. In many districts the school board, acting for the community, initiated the process by asking hard questions about educational results.

Most people will freely dispense advice when asked. The insightful superintendent should involve the board and the community one step beyond advice—make them part of the problem-solving team. Not only should everyone feel comfortable about offering suggestions or raising questions, but the entire community should be encouraged to assist in ensuring that the instructional management system is, in fact, effective in reaching specified goals.

To get those results, a school board must be willing to set effective instructional management as its highest priority and be willing to back up the decision with the necessary resources, including funds and high-profile support for the program and staff. Parents and business people should also join the team.

The Principal—Vital Instructional Leader

Traditionally, principals have been viewed as the instructional leaders in their buildings, but the realities of the position all too often dictate a role that is anything and everything but that of instructional leader. The principal's office is the hub of a complex, churning mechanism, and its occupant is prey to a seemingly endless array of competing demands and interrupted tasks. Yet good principals know their prime function is to use the resources and people at their disposal in such a way as to make learning happen. Many principals rely on an implicit or instinctive management model to do so.

When that model is made explicit—as in a system of effective instructional management—the principal's role as instructional leader is legitimized. Superintendents who have worked with the kind of management programs discussed here have commented on this phenomenon. Says John Champlin, "Some principals hide behind their positional power. They sit back and pontificate, aloof

from the classroom. You have to get them into the instructional arena and that can take intensive training. In Johnson City we changed the traditional principal-teacher hierarchy and made the principal a teaching facilitator."

The expected behaviors for principals should become explicit, rather than assuming that everyone knows what the principals are to do. William D. Greenfield in analyzing the research for a chapter of *The Effective Principal* (1982), identified "enduring characteristics of the role which research suggests are critical to effective performance." School site leaders who are considered to be effective exhibit the ability to:

- Work closely with others on a face-to-face basis
- Manage conflict and ambiguity
- Integrate a cluster of demands competing for their time and attention
- Anticipate and adapt in rapidly changing human, social, and environmental conditions
- Think and exercise discretion in formulating action plans and decisions responding to the contingencies of a system in constant motion
- Assess and evaluate the consequences of schooling for children in light of knowledge regarding effective educational and managerial practices.

In the Plymouth-Canton Community Schools (Michigan) the emphasis on the principal's instructional leadership defines the role expectations. In 1977, Plymouth-Canton began a comprehensive curriculum development and program evaluation plan. Implementing the plan required knowledge in such areas as organization, planning, coordination, communication, evaluation, and decision making—"all natural functions of the principal," according to superintendent John Hoben. "Overriding all of this, however," Hoben continues, "is the concept that the principal is first and foremost a climate leader."

Among the major curriculum and instruction responsibilities of the principal specified in the Plymouth-Canton plan are these:

- Develop appropriate building-level strategies for instruction consistent with the district's stated goals and objectives
- Implement an instructional management system at the building level to facilitate achieving the desired outcomes of the instructional program
- Monitor the implementation of the curriculum, supervise instruction, and report progress at the building level
- Establish an open and supportive system of communication horizontally between professional peers and colleagues and

vertically between students, teachers, administrators, and parents

- Institute a systematic approach to staff planning and shared decision making on what can be done at the building level to improve instruction and student performance based on the stated curriculum goals and objectives of the district
- Maintain regular communication with staff members from the building serving on curriculum or instruction task forces and become directly involved with such task forces if possible
- Know thoroughly the specifics of the district's curriculum design and organization
- Establish a written plan, to be openly communicated to parents, staff, administration, and the board of education, delineating the building's activities in regard to district goals and priorities
- Set expectations for staff and determine the necessary procedures, strategies, and timetable for accomplishing those expectations
- Define a means of evaluating building-level progress
- Conduct an ongoing assessment of the school's learning climate and initiate action toward constructive change.

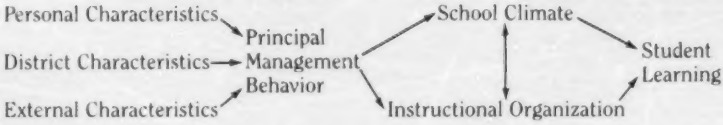
These responsibilities add up to a theoretical and practical affirmation of the principal's crucial leadership role in curriculum and instruction. In addition, this definition of the principal's role assumes, and provides for, a broader knowledge base for the principal regarding districtwide instructional priorities and provides a rationale for building-level planning, organizing, decision making, and allocating resources.

Research confirms the responsibilities articulated for principals in the Plymouth-Canton Community Schools. In "The Effective Principal in Action" Caroline Hodges Persell and Peter W. Cookson, Jr., reviewed 75 research studies and as a result, listed these behaviors:

- Demonstrating a commitment to academic goals
- Creating a climate of high expectations
- Functioning as an instructional leader
- Being a forceful and dynamic leader
- Consulting effectively with others
- Creating order and discipline
- Marshalling resources
- Using time well
- Evaluating results.

Steve Bossert and his coauthors include also consideration of instructional organization, school climate, and influence behavior (Bossert and others, 1982). The dynamic interrelationships of all these factors, outlined in Figure 6, affect student learning.

Figure 6
A Framework for Examining Instructional Management



Steven Bossert, David Dwyer, Brian Rowan, and Ginny Lee. "The Instructional Management Role of the Principal," *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 18, 3 (Summer 1982) p. 40.

Teachers: The Heart of Effective Instruction

Any effort to improve instruction and increase achievement rests ultimately on the classroom teacher's shoulders. And because it is the teacher who will actually carry out instruction, faculty representatives must be intimately involved in all phases of planning and implementing an instructional management program—including the design of staff development sessions. Because it is the critical link between the student and achievement, the teacher's instructional role is discussed in more detail in chapter 6.

Effective Leadership: Continuous Team Building

The question of who is to take charge in leading the development of an effective instructional management effort is perhaps best answered by thinking of leadership in less conventional ways. Regarding instructional program improvement and principals, Gary Phillips of I/D/E/A, has written "Some do, some don't; some will, some won't. But, someone must assume a leadership role. . . ." The more ownership all participants—including taxpayers and employers—have in program improvement projects, the more successful the outcome will be. Phillips claims that "A prescription without a process creates problems without improvement."

Effective leadership generates and maintains the enthusiasm of everyone on the team. The elements of I/D/E/A's school improvement endeavor provide food for thought. They are:

1. Mobilizing new participants and creating new roles for existing participants
2. Approaching program improvement as a continuous process, not a single event
3. Expanding collaborative governance
4. Rewarding quality and celebrating excellence
5. Envisioning the best we can imagine
6. Accompanying program improvement with planning improvement in the personal lives of all participants
7. Using Theory-2 governance
8. Realizing that any force powerful enough to be a constraint has the potential for being a source of assistance for program improvement.

Summary

School superintendents have every reason to be optimistic about the future of public education. Leadership has often been assumed to be based on formal positional power. However, instructional leadership can spring from any other one of a number of sources, if there is a systematic and purposeful process that encourages new partnerships and delineates their interlocking roles. Effective instructional management systems by their very nature make co-conspirators of superintendents, board members, central office staff, parents and community members, principals, and teachers.

CHAPTER 6

THE TEACHER'S ROLE IN EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTION

Teachers are, of course, a mainstay in the educational enterprise. Teachers interpret a school board's goals and the superintendent's decisions through their daily actions. Not only do teachers directly influence student achievement, but their close contact with students builds rapport and memories that have a residual effect throughout many lives.

Since they are such powerful agents in the learning process, the involvement of teachers in an instructional management design is of critical importance. There are a few administrators who can get by with just giving orders and still obtain adherence of the teachers to the tenets of the model presented in this book, but such an approach does not guarantee a smooth implementation nor a full commitment from the teachers. Regardless of their leadership styles, top school officials who contributed to this book all involved teachers in the design of their programs. In most cases an *effective* instructional management model cannot be designed solely within the confines of the central office.

". . . Teachers must be involved in curriculum development and revision as a professional right and obligation," wrote David Selden in an article for *Educational Leadership* (1975). "Teachers are professionals," and, consequently, should be treated as professionals capable of advancing the planning of instructional management programs. Uninvolved teachers can become transformed into expert sharpshooters capable of bringing down the mightiest educational innovation with a few carefully placed shots.

The instructional management planning tea should include teachers. Because everyone cannot participate, teacher representatives may be necessary. They can be chosen for a variety of reasons; however, it helps if some of these designees are those capable of influencing their colleagues.

Moving From Teacher-Centered To Learner-Centered Instruction

When the Plymouth-Canton Community Schools in Michigan began the process of articulating curriculum districtwide, their second step—after getting educational goals down in writing—was to examine research findings on how children learn. That research was then applied in the development of effective instructional and clinical supervision skills. Hoben and his staff identified eight research-based instructional factors that promote higher student achievement:

1. *Clarity.* The teacher's presentations of material are clear and expectations for student performance are clearly stated and understood.
2. *Structure.* The classroom is characterized by a high degree of structure. Students understand and can articulate classroom procedures and organizing principles.
3. *Time.* The teacher spends a large proportion of time on instruction and uses guided practice to help keep students on task.
4. *Reinforcement.* The teacher uses supportive, positive feedback in interactions with students to reinforce learning.
5. *Recitation.* Students are given ample opportunity to take part in classroom discussions.
6. *Accurate predictions.* The teacher has realistic expectations of students and can accurately predict their performances.
7. *Prescription.* The teacher prescribes appropriate learning tasks for each student.
8. *Immediate correction.* The teacher uses timely supplemental instruction with students who do not master a learning task.

Other districts have compiled similar lists, and while the specifics vary from district to district, such lists share a common function: to serve as a map for teacher effectiveness. From this core of essential assumptions about teaching can arise a district's organization of instruction and supervision, along with the structure of necessary staff development programs. But arriving at a list of shared assumptions about teaching may take more than careful sifting of recent research on the subject. It often involves challenging and modifying ingrained traditional beliefs and practices. At the very least, classroom operational techniques are altered to reflect pedagogical beliefs.

Robert E. Corrigan, president of the educational consulting firm R.E. Corrigan Associates, postulates two separate models of instruction: the teacher-centered, open-loop model, and the learner-centered, closed-loop model.

In teacher-centered open-loop models of instruction:

- The emphasis is on presentation and complexity is determined by the materials used
- Instructional planning is based on coverage versus time
- Instructional materials are selected to satisfy content requirements
- Instructional dynamics are one-way communication with random teacher-student interaction
- Pace of instruction is determined by time limits and amount of material to be covered
- Testing is norm-referenced, covering sample materials, with delayed feedback to students
- Testing results are used to evaluate students and then stored.

In learner-centered closed-loop models of instruction:

- The emphasis is on interaction and demonstrated student success, and complexity is tailored to learner capability
- Instructional planning is an analysis of required knowledge and skills of learners to achieve the learning objectives
- Instructional materials are selected based on learner capabilities to achieve learning objectives
- Instructional dynamics are a two-way communication with continual, planned teacher-student interaction
- Pace of instruction is determined by student ability to demonstrate understanding at each learning step
- Testing is criterion-referenced with immediate feedback to students
- Results from testing are used to evaluate effectiveness of instructional methods and materials and to revise methods and materials until students achieve learning objectives (Corrigan, 1980).

Delivering positive educational results requires moving away from the teacher-centered model to the learner-centered approach to instruction. "Success in the classroom is the result of a proper mixing of the teacher, the students, and the instructional methods and materials," says Corrigan, who invites educators to compare and contrast the two models and decide which they prefer.

The move that Corrigan calls for from one mode of instruction to another is similar to principles espoused by the Network for Outcome-Based Schools. The Network's list of philosophical premises and operational essentials also represents a fundamental shift in the way instruction is delivered and managed. As William Spady puts it, "Network schools have moved away from the traditional time- and role-based structuring of student program and task

assignment to an outcome- and goal-based mode of management."

Helping teachers make the transition requires careful mapping of the instructional process, from planning through delivery and assessment. Some school systems discussed in this publication delineated a process of instruction to provide favorable conditions for learning. The process can be divided into three stages: (1) preinstructional, (2) instructional, and (3) postinstructional. (The division, it should be noted, is purely for the sake of organization. In reality, the three stages occur more or less simultaneously.) For more description of the stages, see pages 77 to 80.

The Essential Skills Of Instruction

The instructional models used in many districts that have implemented "outcome-based" instructional management systems are grounded in a basic assumption: despite individual learning style differences in students, variances in their eventual achievement can be significantly reduced through the proper instructional approaches. According to Benjamin Bloom, whose work forms the foundation for mastery learning, if the necessary cognitive prerequisites (skills and knowledge) and affective entry characteristics (attitude, interest, self-concept) can be identified, and if teachers can ensure that all students possess them, then most students can achieve at roughly the same level usually attained only by the best students.

This pedagogical approach requires a particular set of skills on the teacher's part. In their book *Effective Instruction* (1982), Tamar Levin and Ruth Long identify a number of those skills. The teacher must be able to:

- Use alternative patterns of instruction adequately and sensitively
- Sequence instruction, and time the transition from one activity to the next in an appropriate way
- Determine performance standards on a rational basis and define them with sensitivity
- Use reinforcement and rewards carefully.

"Anyone can develop the ability to properly adjust to individual differences," write Levin and Long. "Our success as teachers depends on several factors—continuous experiences with relevant behaviors, willingness to change and correct procedures through formal or informal self-evaluation of behaviors, positive and sensitive acceptance of students' responses to classroom processes, confidence in our ability to teach, and our expectations and beliefs in the potential of school and schooling for all students."

To help teachers assess their own classroom performance, Levin and Long provide a self-evaluation checklist of 45 statements that describe a teacher's activities in relation to feedback and corrective procedures, instructional cues, and involving students in learning. The statements are coded "+" for positive activities and "−" for negative ones. While most teachers will not include all of the suggested procedures in each lesson, over a period of time a teacher who uses a checklist should expect to get more "yes" responses to positive statements and more "no" responses to negative ones.

Here are a few sample statements from their checklist. These are from the *Feedbacks and Correctives* portion:

+ I let students know how well their learning is progressing.

− I did not state explicitly enough the mastery criteria students need to achieve.

+ I referred students to alternative instructional materials to correct test items they missed (or correct misunderstandings).

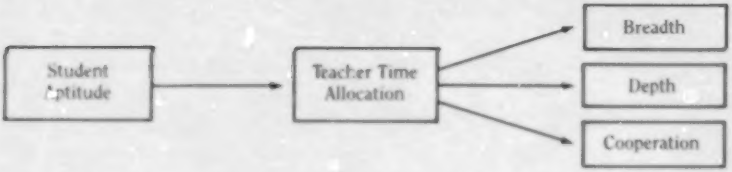
+ I repeated students' correct responses to ensure that each student heard.

These are just some samples of the skills needed for the pedagogical approach. Although many teachers report that such skills are not that easily implemented, it's important that teachers learn to adjust various conditions within their classrooms to achieve a workable environment that reflects principles of effective instructional management.

Time as a Factor

Marshall Arlin, a professor of psychology and education at the University of British Columbia, investigated the factor of time in the teaching/learning process and constructed a model to analyze how teachers allocate time for a class of students (Figure 7). Each element of the model is interrelated—a modification in one affects the others. A teacher could frustrate the students by reducing an allocation of time that cuts into the amount of material that can be covered or how well it is mastered. If students become frustrated, that affects their cooperation. Some teachers feel that students should cover a given amount of material, while others adopt a stance of building upon success at each stage even to the point of sacrificing coverage. Meanwhile, student aptitude varies from child to child and subject to subject regardless of a teacher's aims, placing weighty managerial demands on the teacher, and affecting all classroom management decisions. But teachers have always confronted this dilemma. Effective instructional management programs do not eliminate these concerns, but they do illuminate the

Figure 7
Arlin's Analysis of How Teachers Allocate Time



Aptitude: an individual's time needed to learn
Breadth: amount or extent of learning: "coverage"
Depth: level of intensity of learning: "mastery"
Cooperation: degree to which students participate in learning congruent with teacher's expectations

problems and put them on centerstage and offer teachers new ways to balance competing demands.

Arlin summarized his research conclusions on time and mastery as follows:

- First, mastery procedures do seem to heighten teachers' awareness about time considerations, particularly student differences in time needed to learn.
- Second, providing separate types of review and differing amounts of time to slower students proved infeasible in this experiment. Most teachers eventually provided the same time and reinstruction to everyone who had not achieved mastery on the formative quiz.
- Third, time is not an unlimited resource, and obtaining extra time for slower learners can present a problem, particularly when a teacher is faced with taking time away from one subject to ensure mastery in another. Some teachers in the study felt that taking time from other subjects was defensible for this short pilot experiment, but they could not accept that concept on a longer-term basis.
- Fourth, many teachers had difficulty with the problem of faster learners finishing earlier. Some teachers provided alternative activities such as enrichment or tutoring. However, others had misgivings about the true function of these activities and worried that the latent function of these activities might be holding the students back (Arlin, 1982).

How can a workable environment be established for the students and the teachers? The results of the experiment about which Arlin wrote seemed to indicate that a workable environment was achieved by timing instruction to the needs of students with lower aptitudes. This may seem alarming but remember the typical teacher gears instruction for the "average" student, which ignores both ends of the spectrum. At least in this experiment all youngsters achieved basic mastery or depth and "cooperation." Until we forsake or alter the traditional structures of a school day, year, and K-12 concept, this enigmatic riddle remains, and a totally comprehensive system of instructional management that magically dissolves these problems remains an abstraction.

The search for a better way has led, though, to current conceptualizations and applications of instructional management. While perfection may still be distant, we can offer, with an effective instructional management system, a much needed theoretical framework for the neophyte teacher. For the experienced teacher, without curtailing the positive aspect of their already-established routines, we can provide them with methods to enliven their classrooms while raising educational productivity.

Teachers As Learners

Helping teachers sharpen their instructional skills is central to implementing an instructional management system. All the superintendents interviewed for this publication place high priority on staff development, stressing the need to design inservice programs on the basis of what research says about teaching and learning. That goes for adults as well as children.

In the Glendale Union High School District, for example, staff development focuses on the essential components of effective instruction identified by Madeline Hunter and her colleagues at UCLA. Glendale considers its staff development program a vehicle for obtaining the following objectives:

- To increase teacher competence in planning and delivering classroom instruction
- To give administrators the skills they need for effective observation and evaluation of teacher performance
- To provide teachers with technical assistance in complying with the state's accountability legislation
- To establish a valid index of teacher competence in instructional skills as one basis for granting tenure or displacing continuing teachers.

An outside consultant provided the initial training and trained

district personnel to conduct subsequent training sessions. In a workshop setting, the trainer presented information about the essential components of instruction and gave teachers the opportunity to practice newly acquired skills and to analyze teaching episodes. The workshop sessions were followed up with classroom observations, in which the trainer watched each teacher put the new skills into practice and provided necessary feedback. Over 100 Glendale teachers received this type of training during the 1981-82 school year.

In the Plymouth-Canton Schools (Michigan), as in Glendale, staff development focuses on essential elements of instruction. Both districts include the following four content areas in their staff development programs;

1. Selecting instructional objectives at the appropriate level of difficulty
2. Teaching to an instructional objective
3. Monitoring student achievement and adjusting instruction to meet student needs
4. Applying the principles of learning to the planning and delivery of instruction. (The principles of learning include: active participation, anticipatory set, motivation, retention, practice, modeling, transfer of learning, closure, and reinforcement.)

Figure 8 shows how Plymouth-Canton configures principles of learning in the design of a lesson.

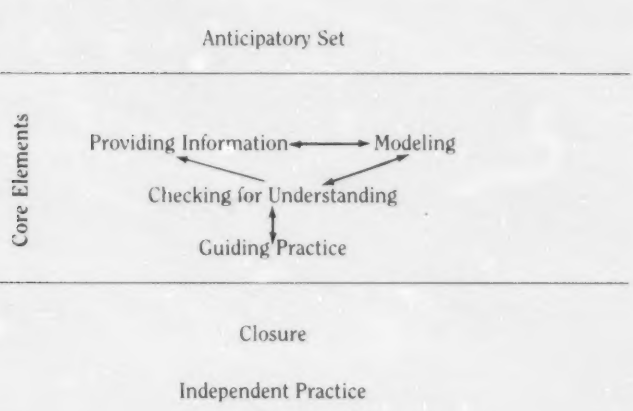
Importance Of Self-Appraisal

Teachers should be encouraged to raise questions about their own behaviors and attitudes towards the teaching/learning process. In "Social Aspects of Instructional Management," James Duncan offers a series of diagnostic inquiries to help teachers analyze difficulties in instructional management.

For example, teachers could ask:

- Are my expectations for behavior understood and accepted by the students?
- Can the students meet my expectations with reasonable effort?
- How do any sentiments in the situation affect the students' performances (sentiments towards themselves? other students? the teacher? the task at hand?)
- What classroom interactions, if any, might have precipitated any difficulties? (teacher-student? or student-student interactions?)
- Are the activities I have associated with the instructional dif-

Figure 8
Elements of Lesson Design—
Plymouth-Canton Schools



ficulties appropriate for the students and the learning task at hand?

The teacher can follow with these questions that focus on efforts to generate more appropriate kinds of behavior:

- What interactions do I employ to encourage more appropriate kinds of behavior?
- What sanctions (rewards) am I providing for appropriate kinds of behavior?
- What sanctions (punishments) am I providing for inappropriate behavior?

Suggested Stages of Instruction

The Preinstructional Stage: Organizing Curriculum And Planning For Instruction

Because curriculum and instruction are so fundamentally intertwined, the curriculum must be organized to be consistent with the instructional process. For example, in Johnson City, the following approaches were applied:

- Courses are organized into a number of separate units, each about two weeks long

- Each unit has a point of beginning and a point of conclusion
- Beginning and ending dates of the units are announced
- Unifying ideas and specific objectives are stated for each unit.

In addition, each objective is classified according to a modified Bloom's taxonomy, with the objectives sequenced in terms of progressive complexity. The necessary prerequisite cognitive skills for each objective are also listed, along with formal or informal means of assessing those skills.

Next, teachers design an overview of the unit or lesson and plan their initial instructional activities, bearing in mind the nature and difficulty of the objective. When appropriate, they plan for more than one student learning style, for example, verbal or written.

Next, they design activities for student participation and for guided practice, correctives, and enrichment activities—all using different illustrations or learning modes. The enrichment activities include challenge problems, subject explorations, research activities, and inquiry exercises.

Finally, they specify assessment strategies and determine and announce levels of mastery and standards for particular grades.

All this takes place literally before students enter the classroom, as a necessary prerequisite in the process of effective instruction. As John Champlin observed in *Time On Task*, a publication of the American Association of School Administrators, "Diagnosis or prescription cannot be an on-the-spot decision or a miraculous cure. It comes from the teacher's ability to know and anticipate what information the students need. This knowledge can only come from planning." While some educators might dispute this sweeping broadside and nearly everyone can cite an exemplary teacher who seems to perform in spite of short preparation, it would appear even these teachers are applying previous planning experiences to new circumstances. A teacher has four major responsibilities during this preinstructional stage:

- Assess the necessary prerequisite skills, using formal or informal assessment techniques
- Review, reteach, or teach any prerequisites that have not been learned
- Motivate students to see the need to study the unit at hand
- Consider the feelings of students who have been unsuccessful in previous learning encounters in the discipline, understanding that previous failure may cause fear of further failure.

Teachers should help students realize that if they do not master a particular task the first time, correctives and retesting will be

provided. In other words, students (and teachers) have a second chance.

The Instructional Stage: The Mastery Learning Link

Mastery learning, now used in many schools, assumes that virtually all students can learn, and that learning can be improved greatly, provided favorable learning conditions are present. Among these conditions are:

- Clearly defined goals and objectives
- Communication of expectations to students
- Direct teaching to those objectives
- Monitoring of student progress and performance.

Elements of mastery learning underlie all aspects of the Johnson City instructional process, but they are particularly explicit in the instructional stage. This stage includes four major parts:

1. *Initial Instruction.* Formal instruction begins with an overview of the unit or lesson to be taught. Because of the varied ways students learn, it is important during initial instruction to provide at least two modes of presentation—such as visual and verbal, or lecture and class discussion—whenever appropriate. Initial instruction should reflect differences when the learning focus involves concepts, skills, or facts since each implies a unique approach.

2. *Informal assessments.* Throughout the entire instructional process, the teacher performs informal assessments to foster active participation and reduce negative responses from students. The teacher also uses informal assessments to diversify the instructional approach as necessary.

3. *Guided practice.* After introductory instruction, the teacher arranges opportunities to practice the skills or tasks in the lesson, under teacher direction. Guided practice enhances the prospect that when students practice independently, their work will be correct.

4. *Formative assessments.* The teacher administers criterion-referenced tests to find out which students have mastered the objectives. For those students who did not achieve a sufficient number of those objectives, teaching strategies are altered, and "correctives" put into action.

After achieving mastery, students have opportunities for in-depth, high level cognitive experiences and are able to explore topics independent of formal classroom instruction.

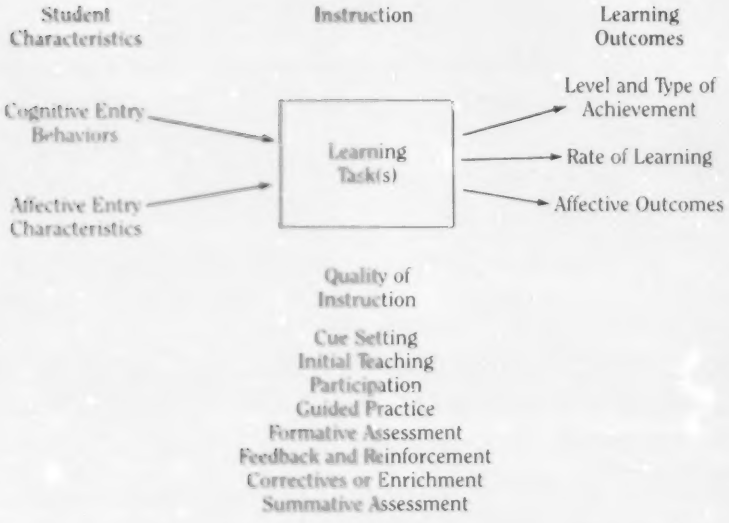
The Postinstructional Stage: Assessing Outcomes

The proof of effective instruction is how well students master the content of the lesson or unit. In this stage, summative assessments are done to see if students have reached the predetermined objectives. Students receive grades based on pre-published standards, which leads to an objective and nonpunitive grading system.

The teacher, who must decide whether to continue to the next phase of instruction, bases the decision on the students' collective demonstrated mastery of the current lesson. Since certain levels of mastery are predetermined as prerequisites, students who need additional time receive it, and have an opportunity to demonstrate their mastery; and the teacher amends their grades to reflect their new capabilities.

Figure 9 shows the relationship between student characteristics, quality of instruction, and learning outcomes in the Johnson City instructional model.

Figure 9
The Johnson City Instructional Model.



Summary

Ultimately, teachers determine the real definition of instructional management as they incorporate procedures within their classrooms. Some administrators occasionally propose that classroom disasters can be averted and learning made productive simply through better preparation on the part of teachers. While being prepared is certainly a good suggestion, by itself it is overly simplistic. Instructional management, as described in this book, focuses the reader's attention on the core instructional and classroom management techniques that practitioners use in planning and understanding how to improve student achievement. It also forces attention on staff development and evaluation systems for students, teachers, and administrators to achieve desired results.

CHAPTER 7
ASSESSING RESULTS

It is true in school improvement that the decisions that most directly affect the learner are the ones made closest to the learner. When those decisions are based on "professional hunches" or shop-worn convictions and not on sound data, however, both the learner and the learning often suffer.

Decision making often spirals upward, from the teacher to the department head to the principal to the district level. But decision making in most successful school districts is grounded in data, not hunches.

How does a principal know whether individual students are performing up to expectations? How does the district gauge the success of an educational program? When something goes wrong, how does anyone know at what point in the process it would be most effective to intervene, and what form the intervention should take?

These basic questions of assessment and evaluation in an effective instructional management system are answered on the basis of careful selection and analysis of pertinent data. The data itself may be stored in a sophisticated, state-of-the-art computer, or it may be housed in a rusty filing cabinet, but the principles are the same.

Assessing Students' Progress

Various approaches can be used to verify that learning has taken place. These approaches are outlined briefly in Chapter 3 and are compared in detail in Figure 10. Among them, criterion-referenced testing is felt by many to hold the most promise.

Because criterion-referenced tests are designed (often by the district's own staff) to measure the specific skills and concepts that make up a designated curriculum, they can be used to determine whether each student has acquired those specific skills and concepts. On a criterion-referenced test, each skill or concept is ex-

Figure 10
Options in Verifying Learning

Test	To Measure	Scheduled Use	Recordkeeping	Curriculum Data	Steps in Developing	Advantages	Disadvantages
I. Standardized—Norm Referenced	General achievement Some objectives in basic skills areas may match the test	Usually October/May Every grade is tested	Minimal, if scored by dealer	Comparison with normed groups Rough estimate of achievement in sampling of about 20% of objectives	Match test items to objectives Prepare recordkeeping system	Comparisons with normed groups Little bookkeeping required	Minimal verification of local objectives Minimal diagnostic and master data May not match objectives
II. Criterion-Referenced • Objective—written tests • Teacher Observation—with structured criteria and standards	Mastery of every learning objective at all grade levels	Pretest and post-test every objective as the teacher wishes	Individual and class records kept by teachers* School or grade level records prepared by the district *Heavy bookkeeping required all year	Diagnostic for teachers when given as pretest Mastery for teachers when used as post-test Mastery and curriculum verification for school and district	Write or buy ten or more test items per objective Field test. Determine validity, difficulty and discriminability Revise tests Prepare recordkeeping system	Diagnostic and mastery data are very specific Tests are carefully prepared to match all learning objectives Available for teacher use all year long whenever they wish	Comparisons with normed group cannot be made Much bookkeeping is needed No general fall/spring data are available

III. Domain Referenced • Objective • Work Samples assessed using structured criteria and standards	Mastery of every program objective at all grades Mastery of some learning objectives is measured if those objectives are of high priority and warrant more test items than other objectives	Pretest and post-test in October/May Pretest for each entering student during the year	Individual and class records kept by teachers** School or grade level records prepared by district **Twice a year	Diagnostic for teachers Mastery for teachers Mastery and curriculum verification of major learning objectives for school or district	Prioritize learning objectives Write or buy 50 or more test items per program objective Field test items to determine validity, reliability, difficulty and discriminability Revise items Separate into two tests Prepare recordkeeping system	Diagnostic test battery every fall and whenever new student enrolls Mastery test every spring (sections on some domains might be used by teachers during the year, if desired) District and teacher data easily completed	Comparisons with normed group cannot be made

Source: Phyllis R. Pringle, *Developing Outcomes-Based Curriculum Systems to Improve Students' Learning* (Cincinnati: Educational Services Institute, 1982).

pressed in terms of a behavioral objective and tested by a number of items to obtain an adequate sample of student performance and to minimize the effect of guessing. Each student's performance is measured against a pre-set standard of acceptable achievement—not against the performance of other students, as in norm-referenced tests.

Criterion-referenced tests can be used to find out how much students know before instruction begins and after it is completed. They can be used to help teachers plan instruction and place students in appropriate levels or groupings of instruction.

Like standardized, norm-referenced tests, criterion-referenced tests can be purchased ready made. Most educators agree, however, that tests developed by district staff are more likely to provide a closer match between the district's stated goals and objectives and the skills and concepts assessed. For that reason, many districts include the development of criterion-referenced test items as a central part of the district's staff development program.

The Glendale Educational Management System manual, for example, devotes a section to criterion-referenced-testing (CRT) models, item development and analysis, and field testing. Once the course structure is completed in a particular subject area, the structure is documented with titles, goal statements, and terminal objectives for each unit and a task analysis for each terminal objective. Then a teacher leader works with representatives from each school, training them to write CRT models.

The models consist of the following parts:

- *Objective*—the skill or concept being tested.
- *Stem*—the portion of the item that presents to the learner a problem to be solved, a set of directions, and a diagram or other stimulus.
- *Response alternatives*—a series of response options including the correct response and the incorrect responses or distractors.
- *Item sample*—an example of what the final test will look like, using the CRT model as a "blueprint."

Under the direction of the teacher leader, the CRT models are critiqued and revised, then distributed to all district teachers of that particular course for their evaluation. The evaluation form includes these questions:

The Objective

- Is this objective important enough to be tested?
- Will a majority of students have the skills or capabilities necessary to achieve this objective after experiencing adequate instruction?

The Model

- Will the items that can be created from this model adequately measure the objective?
- Will items from this model present a manageable task to students?
- Will the directions for completing the item be clear to all students?
- Will the distractors (incorrect responses) be plausible?
- Will the distractors reflect common error patterns?

The answers to these questions, along with any additional comments the evaluators care to make, are examined and summarized, and the models are revised and added to Glendale's systems manual.

Next, the teacher leader and school representatives write a pool of test items, bearing in mind the specified characteristics of a good criterion-referenced testing (CRT) item. For example, in a multiple-choice item, the stem must define a problem or task, giving only information relevant to the completion of the item. There should be no verbal clues that give away the correct answer. The response alternatives must be clearly worded, grammatically consistent with the stem, and parallel to each other in length. Again, verbal clues that could give away the answer must be avoided, and distractors must be plausible.

Items from the item pool are then field-tested, both with individual students and with groups of students, and the results analyzed, item by item, according to guidelines for item analysis. For example, if fewer than 40 percent of the students in the field test selected the correct response for a particular item, the item may have been too difficult, or instruction on that skill or concept may have been inadequate. Similarly, if more than 85 percent got the correct answer, the item may have been too easy, the distractors may not have been plausible—or the instruction may have been thorough. It is noteworthy that Glendale's procedures do not automatically assume that the test item is "bad" and should be replaced if nearly all the students get the item correct. After all, teachers should expect that every student can master the material and teach in a corresponding fashion.

School districts interested in instructional management should not hesitate to use whatever resources are available for student assessment. While locally designed criterion-referenced testing is desirable, some districts may not have a staff with sufficient knowledge or the funds to train them adequately to create a program. Many commercial textbooks and instructional packages now have built-in CRT systems that can be used quite successfully in lieu of local models. Of course, if a CRT system is unavailable, employing norm-referenced test data for making educational decisions

within the context of instructional management is considerably better than arbitrary judgment.

Then, too, some instructional areas, such as the arts, lend themselves more readily to perceptual data, although it is possible to set up criterion-referenced tests here too—it just takes more time and is more difficult. Regardless of the assessment instruments used, however, meaningful data on student performance should result from the instructional process in order to provide workable formats for monitoring and reporting purposes. At first, though, administrators may have to compromise on the ideal assessment model.

Norm-referenced tests and perceptual data can also serve as a check on criterion-referenced testing data to validate program results and to assess overall evaluation purposes. Other possible indicators of student achievement might include: scores on college admission tests, number of National Merit Scholarship winners, number of honor roll or National Honor Society students, percentages of student grades in various subjects, percentage of students exceeding local or state graduation requirements, dropout statistics, winners of various contests, numbers of students enrolled in advanced or remedial courses, and so on. An administrator who genuinely manages instruction will capitalize on as many existing sources of information as possible to corroborate that students are learning at expected levels.

Data-Based Instructional Planning

Successful classroom management is largely a matter of what William Spady calls "timely, targeted instructional delivery"—assigning the right task to a student at the right time. Even when all students start out with the same instructional needs, their ability, experience, and motivation will differ, as will their learning styles and the amount of time it takes them to accomplish a particular learning task. Teachers need to be able to assess where each student stands in relation to lesson or unit objectives before instruction begins. They need to be able to assess each student's progress during the instructional cycle. And they need to be able to assess the learning outcomes each student has achieved. Without this knowledge, some students will be pushed ahead too quickly and never master the skills and concepts they need in order to successfully undertake the next learning task. Similarly, students who learn more quickly will waste valuable time on tasks that are too easy for them—time they might spend on more intensive or more challenging material.

This is, in fact, a fairly accurate picture of what happens in many traditional classrooms. In times past when our educational system was expected to graduate only a small proportion of the nation's youth, there was little cause to worry about those who were left behind. Expectations are different now, but in many schools instructional practices have not kept pace with those expectations. Some schools have attempted to compensate for student learning programs or packages. But as Stephen F. Rubin, assistant superintendent for instruction in New Canaan, Connecticut, has pointed out, "While this method does, indeed, respond to the range of learning needs characteristic of any group, it does so at the cost of removing teachers from students and students from each other."

Rubin has developed a continuous progress mastery learning program in which instructional groups are formed around specific learning objectives or outcomes. "All students in any of the assembled classes not only share a congruent need to learn a particular objective, but also have all met the prerequisites necessary for learning it," explains Rubin. "Teachers can zero in on the needs of the students in such a group since the range of learning needs is highly restricted and limited."

One of the tools that makes the program possible is what Rubin calls a "cognitive hierarchy"—a "map" that graphically displays all of the steps, routes, and sequences in a particular field of knowledge (in this case, mathematics). For each learning outcome in the cognitive hierarchy, there is a corresponding validated test or means of evaluating the outcome.

"Many a student who appears to 'get stuck' at some point in a math program—or in any other course—may neither be 'inept, lazy, or unmotivated' nor a 'slow learner,'" says Rubin. "She or he may simply lack the critical prerequisite knowledge."

One important use of the cognitive hierarchy is to maintain *student profiles*. Each student keeps his or her profile up to date by coloring in the corresponding circles on the hierarchy as new skills and concepts are attained. The completed circles are color coded according to time, so that on any occasion, a student's hierarchy shows what knowledge the student has attained, when that knowledge was attained, and what knowledge the student does not yet possess.

The New Canaan hierarchy is also central to an efficient *recordkeeping and data-collecting system* that includes each student's scores on all criterion-referenced tests and a qualitative rating of the student's work on a particular objective and during a particular period of time. This system has proved valuable during parent-teacher conferences and reporting periods.

Finally, the system allows the staff of New Canaan's Center

School, where the program has been in operation for 15 years, to make new program decisions *daily* for approximately 15 percent of the school's 400 to 500 students. When students have mastered particular areas of work, they are re-evaluated and reassigned to other instructional groups that are appropriate for their new instructional needs. "And," says Rubin, "it is all done with amazing ease."

What may sound like a complex data-management task has actually been accomplished in New Canaan by using simple graphic displays. No computer has been involved, though Rubin has recently created a series of software programs to store and display the same kind of information about individual students.

Variations on a Theme—the Computer

In districts where a computer is available, however, data-based instructional planning is made easier with computer-generated profiles of individual students, classes, and schools within a system—as well as longitudinal comparisons. Glendale Union is a district where information validating learning is printed out in a number of ways.

1. *The class summary profile,* provided to the teacher to show both how well individual students have done and to show a class total comparing scores for the class with those for the school and the district.

2. *The student achievement profile,* by teachers, provided to the principal to show class-by-class achievement within the school and to compare the school's achievement with that of the district as a whole.

3. *The discipline summary,* provided to the board of education to show the percent of students scoring 75 percent or higher in a particular area of study. This summary is presented in an easy-to-read bar graph that includes both pre- and post-test scores for the current and preceding years.

4. *The school-by-school summary,* provided to the board to show how each school in the district scored on particular pre- and post-tests. Like the discipline summary, the school-by-school report also shows comparisons with the previous year.

Using such comprehensive data read-outs as these, a staff can pinpoint problems or potential problems and arrive at rational, data-based solutions.

In Glendale, evaluation and planning for improvement is a continual process. Year-end data are submitted to the principal who,

working with the teacher leader, submits findings, conclusions, and recommendations to department chairpersons and teachers. The department then develops and submits an improvement plan to the principal and teacher leader and, after the plan is finalized, the principal submits it to the management system department. The superintendent and department personnel compile an annual report for the board of education and district administrators, with a summary to department chairpersons. Throughout the year, the principal monitors implementation of the department's improvement plans.

"The public's confidence in education will return when local school boards require quality education along with quality control," says Glendale Superintendent Gerald George. "A big step toward quality education with quality control is a systematic educational management program that includes such basic components as allocation of funds, learner goals, behavioral objectives, task analysis, pre-tests, instructional strategies, improvement plans, formative testing, post-tests, and dissemination of results to the public."

Costs Relationships

The Duluth Public Schools in Minnesota have been engaged since the mid 1970s in construction of a computer-based instructional management system that will relate observed or measured student learning in cognitive and affective areas to the costs of instructional services. While precise calculations and exacting formulas have not resulted, the information has been helpful to educational planners and policy makers. The keystone for the project has been a student needs assessment with individual student data being used for the cost effectiveness analyses.

The Duluth project along with other cost-effectiveness studies may eventually provide us with concrete answers to questions about the cost of quality education. In the meantime, administrators using such techniques can better respond to the public about educational expenditures. To re-emphasize, computer technology is *not* a dire necessity when it comes to instructional management. Most school districts go to computers when the "bugs" are eliminated with more conventional techniques.

Some critics or nay-sayers may imply that data-based instructional management systems will dehumanize schools. The reply to such arguments is that effective instructional management as a tool is itself neutral; how humane or inhumane its application

depends on those applying it. Throughout this publication we have repeatedly mentioned staff and community participation in planning—that's just humane democratic administration or, if you will, a "management team" thrust. Common sense and political savvy are other tools brought into play by insightful school administrators when equipping their schools with this or any other educational innovation.

Working with Other Programs

But what about the school that already has in place an instructional program that appears to be achieving acceptable results? Furthermore, what if the staff members are "child-centered" or "progressive" and seemingly antipathetic towards the concept of data based management? While this situation could be a matter of "if it isn't broken don't fix it" or one of those "judgment calls" that force administrators to earn their pay, "progressive education" and effective instructional management can peacefully co-exist, if underlying principles are understood.

One such school is Highland Park Elementary in the South-Western City School District of Ohio. Instructional methodology is patterned after the British "open classroom" concept with an open space architectural style as well. On observing the wide variety of innovations at the school, visitors would not be likely to describe the program as "traditional." Yet, without calling it an effective instructional management system it has been used there for years.

While the Highland Park teachers believe that almost any childhood interest can be the starting point for instruction, skill building is not by chance. Teachers have specified behavioral objectives for skills at each grade level. Students are continually pre- and post-tested at stations staffed by trained paraprofessionals, so that every teacher knows exactly where each student is at all times. At the end of units, students take tests and "progress letters," (Figure 11) are immediately sent home regardless of the time of year. Like other schools we've described, skill profiles in every discipline are maintained for individual students, each classroom, and the school. The principal evaluates pupil progress in reading by comparing the number of students scoring at least 85 percent on the end-of-level tests with numbers from previous years. The principal thus manages instruction by determining how well instructional objectives are being met and identifying strengths and weaknesses.

Perhaps more high achieving "open education" programs would be around today, if teachers and principals had incorporated data and evaluation procedures within their open teaching styles.

Figure 11
Sample Progress Letter

Highland Park Elementary School
South-Western City Schools
Grove City, Ohio

Map and Globe Progress Letter

Name _____ Teacher _____ Date _____

I. *What Is A Globe?*	Pre-test	Post-test
1) Students will define a globe as as model of the earth.		
2) Students will differentiate between land and water areas on a globe.		
3) Students will recognize on a globe the printed names of major water bodies, continents, and countries.		
4) The student will learn that the large masses of land on the globe are continents and that the continent on which he/she lives is North America.		
5) The student will learn that the United States is a part of the continent of North America and is a country.		

Comments:

"M" indicates Mastery

Program Evaluation and Renewal

The AASA publication *Evaluating Educational Programs* calls the cycle from evaluation to improvement a never-ending process: "Renewal is basic to the success of any institution. The person or organization that stands still can expect to fall behind." Renewal is especially critical for schools, for as our society changes, so too do our expectations for education. It is necessary, of course, for a school system to periodically assess how well it is doing in meeting the goals it has set out for itself. But it is also necessary to re-examine those goals from time to time in light of changing economic and occupational trends, changing population patterns, and changing social contexts.

Program evaluation in the first sense—that of measuring how well the district is meeting its goals—involves assessing student performance in relation to expectations and planning for improvement where necessary. The data base that effective instructional management depends on is also crucial to evaluation of the educational program on a systematic basis.

According to John Hoben, superintendent of the Plymouth-Canton Community Schools, program evaluation *is not* teacher or building evaluation. It *does not* establish a standard of achievement expected of all students at a given point in time; specify rigid instructional methods, materials, strategies, approaches, or techniques; establish minimum competencies; nor predetermine outcomes. Instead, program evaluation provides:

- A tool for determining program effectiveness in relation to what has been identified as significant through stated goals and objectives
- A means to identify program needs and strengths
- A base for annual and long-range program planning;
- A base for decision making about curriculum content and organization
- A base for decision making regarding instructional improvement and student performance
- A way to determine priorities in curriculum and instruction
- A way to communicate program effectiveness and student performance to the school community
- A yardstick for program accountability allowing any corrective action to be taken at needed levels in the district.

Input into the program evaluation process comes not only from building staffs, administration, and the board of education, but from the community as well. Community involvement is particularly important when it comes to re-evaluating the district's overall educational goals as well as the programs designed to meet those goals. The involvement can take many forms. It can be informal—inviting members of community groups or parent-teacher associations to "grade" the local schools and list three or four areas they believe should be given greatest emphasis in the next school year, for example. More formally, large-scale surveys using a statistical sample of community members can elicit precise priority rankings of various courses or areas of study. Community members can also be asked to join curriculum task forces or school improvement councils to study the school's programs and make recommendations for new directions.

Regardless of how a district's program evaluation plan is configured, it is important that it be both systematic and periodic. Regularly scheduled evaluations of particular curriculum areas or

programs lead to plans for improvement in those areas. Through evaluations, administrators can determine what needs to be kept, what needs to be changed, and what needs to be eliminated. In turn, the effectiveness of those improvements are weighed in subsequent evaluations.

Summary

Program evaluation is a check on the relationship between student achievement and the system's stated goals. But more than that, it must gauge how suitable educational programs are in terms of evolving requirements of local communities and society at large. Data-based management that concentrates on the evaluation and improvement of learning is a vital component of effective instructional management and the driving force behind many school renewal projects. Data collection, however, should not be seen as an end in and of itself. Objectives must be modified as circumstances and evidence indicate.

CHAPTER 8

REACHING FOR CONSENSUS

". . . .[T]he educational process has no end beyond itself; it is its own end."

John Dewey, *Democracy and Education*

"It is one thing to say that education must be purposeful; it is another to say what those purposes should be."

Charles Silberman, *Crisis in the Classroom*

If the schools' only task were to teach all youngsters a commonly *agreed upon* and explicit academic curriculum, then instructional management would be a relatively straightforward matter. The concept of "effective" would be universal and comparative judgments would be readily at hand. But in reality, our schools are charged with a far more complex mission: that of the acculturation of students, both morally and technically, to prepare them to take their places in an adult world governed by social, political, and ethical norms.

Galen Saylor and William Alexander in discussing the issue of *Planning Curriculum for Schools* have written:

> *Schools have been established historically by a social group to serve these functions:*
> *—Transmit the culture*
> *—Contribute to the socialization of the young*
> *—Aid in the preservation of the society as a nation*
> *—Assist in the personal development of the young members of the society*
> *—Contribute to the preparation of the young for adulthood*

Schools are generally thought of as possessing just one mighty goal—the education of children. Yet, the authors of *Make Your Schools Work*, Harvey Scribner and Leonard Stevens, remind us that: "Schools, however, serve more than one end. For society, they socialize and distribute an official culture. For the economy,

they train, assort, and accredit. For a democratic nation, they mold citizens. Education is only part of their business."

Strong feelings are evident in the debate about the primary objective of education. What Robert Ebel wrote a dozen years ago in *Today's Education* is unquestionably more in vogue in the 1980s, although it is not universally accepted. Ebel stated:

> *In my opinion, the essence of achievement in most school subjects is command of useful verbal knowledge. If this is true, then it follows that the schools should direct their primary efforts toward increases in the pupil's cognitive competence, not toward personal adjustment nor toward reconstruction of the society in which the student lives: toward the cultivation of resources for effective behavior, not toward the direct shaping of the behavior itself, toward structures of useful knowledge on various important subjects, not toward the development of general mental abilities.*

The burden of this socialization of young people ascribed to schools is also shared with other institutions such as churches, social work agencies, youth groups, police departments, homes, and so on. Schools and those who staff these organizations have the matchless institutional priority for the intellectual development of youth.

The competing agendas of American education are deeply imbedded in the public consciousness and in the practice of schooling, and it is not likely that a democratic society could easily dispense with any of them. For example, as indicated in chapter 3, school climate is a powerful contributor to academic achievement not easily detached from the marquee of educational goals. Educators have long been of the opinion that children should be the focus of schooling. Yet paradoxically, it is public pressure as much as, if not more than, professional initiative that has prompted the kind of school improvement efforts discussed in this publication.

For nearly half a century the public schools of this country have tried to accomplish what other agencies have not addressed. Educators have had placed on their ever-drooping shoulders more and more social concerns—driver education, sex education, desegregation, drug education, free and reduced lunches, and many more. Resources being what they are, only so much can be embraced by the schools. Daniel Griffiths, writing of "The Crisis in American Education" (*New York University Education Quarterly*, Fall, 1982), stated that ". . . the schools cannot continue to be all things to all people. Our schools have been asked to do too much." The effect of spreading resources too thinly across such a wide band of social and economic reforms has impoverished school

programs. According to Griffiths, the schools must now reject this state of affairs and focus on . . . the original goal set for them by society: the teaching of content that will produce educated people."

During the 1970s two major movements swept through the nation's school houses—"open education" and "back to basics." Both had positive and negative impacts with the latter often being attributed to overzealous radical reformers. Reviews of educational history tell us that in every decade since the mid 1800s a public outcry has arisen over the teaching of the 3 R's. Humane qualities are not discarded in the current results-oriented educational crusade, although the accent is on mastery of verbal, reading, computational, and other skills.

The revived public interest in education is directed, regardless of other goals, at the quintessent cause of our profession—student learning. Extraction of this purpose from the schooling function leaves educators vulnerable to replacement by a whole host of other institutions. The public insistence on results has forced educators in general to recast their efforts upon their foremost responsibility.

Fortunately, many school people were fully positioned to capitalize upon the lay impetus for change. The results-oriented movement sweeping across the country has coincided in time with an emerging body of knowledge about teaching behaviors that are likely to lead to improved learning. The work of the Beginning Teacher Evaluation Studies (BTES) and of Madeline Hunter, Benjamin Bloom, Ron Edmonds, and others has given us what Richard C. Williams of UCLA calls, "an emerging technical instructional core, a core that can begin to form the basis for linking a school district's management system to its central core instructional activities." Effective instructional management systems are evolving from this research and gaining public support due to attention on student results.

The art of effective teaching, though under increasing scrutiny by educational researchers, is still far from an exact science. Educators whose instructional management systems are described in this book are striving to apply what we are coming to know about teaching and learning to the day-to-day practice of their schools. They hope to produce educational outcomes parents and students want and deserve. And in the process, it has become obvious that producing results is possible even while the "technical core" of teaching is still only imperfectly analyzed and translated into practical models. School districts implementing new instructional management programs and many others with similar approaches are narrowing the gap between what schools are and what they might be.

What Schools Could Be

Imagine a school whose staff truly believes that most if not all of the students are capable of learning fully the essentials of the school's formal curriculum. It's not a new idea, but it is a radical one. Schools in most nations are founded on the conviction that there are "good" learners and "poor" learners; that there are quantitative differences in students' abilities that can be measured by standardized tests, plotted on normal distribution curves, and rewarded or penalized by the granting or withholding of credentials.

This pervasive belief has shaped our traditional promotion and grading systems and has helped perpetuate a two-track economic and social hierarchy on both sides of the schoolhouse door. But it need not be that way, as the success of outcome-based mastery learning programs can attest. The typical result of mastery learning, according to Benjamin Bloom, is that about 80 percent of the students in a mastery class will reach the same criterion of achievement (such as A or B+) as the top 20 percent of the class would under conventional group instruction. The difference, says Bloom, is not between "good" and "poor" students but between "faster" and "slower" learners. Slower learners, when they have the extra time and help they need to master a particular learning objective, know it just as well as their faster peers. Moreover, they are able to learn equally complex and abstract ideas, to apply these ideas to new problems, and to retain the ideas equally well.

In schools that have broken through the "bell-shaped-curve mentality," educational achievement can be widespread. Students know they are all expected to perform at high levels, and they know precisely what learning outcomes are expected of them. Because the time allotted to different learning tasks varies according to the task complexity and the student needs, each student experiences personal success. Educators who have adopted effective instructional management systems are convinced that there are truly *No Limits to Learning* (Pergamon Press, 1979).

But Do Schools Really Make a Difference?

For a time, it seemed as if American researchers were concentrating primarily on advancing the proposition that schooling makes little difference in the lives of children. James Coleman's *Equality of Educational Opportunity* (1966) deduced, rather loudly, that variations in school experiences did not affect educational attainment. Christopher Jencks led another such large scale study. Pub-

lished as *Inequality* in 1972, it further embedded the concept that "Variations in what children learn at school depend largely on variations in what they bring to school, not on variations in what schools offer them."

While Christopher Jencks in *Inequality* committed what some felt was educational heresy, he has been forgiven somewhat with the subsequent publication of *Who Gets Ahead? The Determinants of Economic Success in America*. Findings from the two studies are strikingly similar; however, the research questions to which the data were applied differ radically. *Inequality* concluded that schools are ineffective if the goal is equalization of incomes. *Who Gets Ahead?* concluded that economic success (occupational status and earnings) is dependent on the amount of schooling; hence, schools are effective.

The last word on the controversy over the absolute and exact relative effectiveness of schooling is a long way off, but *School Effectiveness: A Reassessment of the Evidence* exonerates school people from much of the scorn that has been heaped on them. The Coleman Report and Jencks' *Inequality* are revisited, their flaws exposed, and other issues explored. George Madaus, Peter Airasian, and Thomas Kellaghan have made a significant contribution with their comprehensive analysis of the empirical evidence and the optimistic conclusions that contradict any suggestions that schooling makes little difference (1980).

The Determinants of Educational Outcomes: The Impact of Families, Peers, Teachers and Schools (Bridge and others, 1979) was another large-scale investigation attempting to identify whether schools make a difference. Gary Bridge, Charles Judd, and Peter Moock synthesized and analyzed more than 15 years of educational research, and not surprisingly, their findings are compatible with *School Effectiveness*. Student characteristics, families, peer groups, teachers, and schools all affect learning.

Michael Rutter, a professor of child psychiatry, led a University of London research team in preparing *Fifteen Thousand Hours: Secondary Schools and Their Effects on Children* (Harvard University Press, 1979). Educators have spotlighted this study because of the decisive conclusion ". . . that schools can do much to foster good behavior and attainments, and that even in a disadvantaged area, schools can be a force for the good." For three years, a field study collected massive amounts of information on all of the students entering twelve inner-city London secondary schools. This research conclusively demonstrated that schools only a scant distance apart with almost exactly the same "pupil intakes" (social background and intellectual ability) engender widely divergent

educational results. The inequities in society were not overcome by the good schools studied. However, students of *all* ability ranges had higher examination scores in the best schools.

Fifteen Thousand Hours not only shatters the proposition that schools make no difference but it also reinforces educational common sense and lay opinion about the value of school attendance. Some of the factors contributing to the difference between effective and ineffective schools included emphasis on academic concerns—amount of homework, use of the library, time spent on instruction, amount of teacher planning, expectations of student performance, and so on. In the affective domain, positive encouragement from teachers during lessons or displaying student work on walls related to good behavior and positive exam results. The extent to which children were given duties of responsibility and were able to consult teachers about personal problems, likewise contributed to successful outcomes.

Thus, much of the research into the overall effectiveness of schooling has generated related findings implying that certain pedagogical procedures can measurably increase the academic achievement of all students. Theoreticians and practitioners alike have harvested such findings when developing effective instructional management systems.

Success seems to breed further success. Systematic instructional management is working to make a difference in districts like Adams County District 12 in Northglenn, Colorado, where average scores on standardized tests have been rising and consistently above the national norms for the past several years.

Timely, Targeted Instructional Delivery

The secret in Northglenn and other districts is what William Spady calls "timely, targeted instructional delivery." Two crucial elements in moving schools closer to what they could be are

- Explicit, agreed-on instructional goals
- Effective management of instructional time.

Setting clear objectives and standards for learning, timing the delivery of instruction so that students are not assigned tasks before they are ready for them (or after), and varying the amount of time given students to master a learning task—all these things individual teachers can control to some extent in their own classrooms.

Teachers are subject even more to influence from building and district organizational procedures and official policies. That means it is not enough to train teachers in such areas as developing and teaching to objectives or increasing academic learning time. True

school improvement requires attacking the variables of time and outcomes from an institutional perspective.

Imagine a school where there are no grade labels at all. The curriculum, a seamless continuum, is sequenced from the less complex to the more complex, mapped to indicate prerequisite skills and knowledge at each step along the way. Students move through the curriculum at their own rate, are tested for readiness before each new step and are tested for mastery after it. A typical eleven-year-old, for example, may be working on "sixth grade" math and "eighth grade" language arts one day and "seventh grade" science and social studies the next. Is this student a sixth grader?

By clinging to traditional calendar-based social promotions, schools run a double risk. The slower learner who is kept back a year for not having performed "at grade level" is faced once again with the same content, the same learning tasks, and likely the same instructional style that led to the initial failure. It doesn't take long for these students to believe they are not capable of learning, and their belief easily becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Students at the other end of the spectrum are also handicapped by an inflexible grade structure. Assigned to a particular grade on the basis of their age, these students often simply mark time, daydreaming their way through instruction that does not challenge their abilities. Special pull-out programs for the gifted and talented, designed to serve these students, are often no more than a bandaid when major surgery is needed. Such gifted programs may only tenuously relate to the work the student is doing in the regular classroom, and real damage may occur to all students by reinforcing the concept that schooling is a selection process, a winnowing of the wheat from the chaff. When schools ought to treat all youngsters as winners, the traditional tendency is to categorize winners and losers.

Reaching Consensus on Curriculum

We have been imagining what schools could be if only certain desirable elements were incorporated into the instructional program. It is just as easy, however, to imagine what might be called "the great school hoax." In this scenario, the central office and building staffs draw up a set of goals and objectives and a curriculum that reflects them. Teachers design their lessons around the objectives and use formative assessments to make sure students are ready to tackle each new task. Learning time and instructional style are varied to fit students' needs, and both formative and summative evaluation results show that students are learning better than ever before. Everyone is happy.

But when graduates show up diploma-in-hand at an employer's personnel office or the university's registration desk, they are discovered to be woefully ill prepared for work or further study. They have learned, all right, but apparently they haven't learned the right material. Apparently the district's goals and objectives were not ambitious enough, or had not been brought up to date with the changing demands of the community, or may even have been downright wrong.

Seldom does it happen that way, of course. Educators are too professional and the public keeps too close an eye on the work of the schools to let it happen. But without *publicly agreed-on* educational standards that are *reviewed and revised* on a regular basis, it could conceivably happen in almost any school district; and the public knows it. Such concern has given impetus to public acknowledgment of educational goals by school districts and even entire states. For example, Pennsylvania's Ten Goals of Quality Education are cited in Figure 12.

The competency-based educational movement slowed somewhat when advocates were unable to supply ready lists of universally accepted competencies not bound by time, geography, or ambition. In retrospect, this should not have been surprising. Norwell Northcutt writing about "Functional Literacy for Adults" notes that the definition of literacy not only requires continual redefinition, but varies from one individual to another. He believes in terms of measuring literacy that ". . . not only must the measure be derived from performances which are taken from the adult milieu (rather than from an elementary or secondary school frame of reference), but that performance on such a measure must be positively correlated to success."

The technology era, which threatens to engulf us, demonstrates how societal trends directly influence the curriculum of schools. "Computer literacy" is one of the latest infusions into the curriculum. Alex Inkeles sets forth his characterization of this phenomenon as follows:

> *Everywhere today—by continent, by nation, by region, by class—there is a vast process of social change exerting its force. To manage their lives in a satisfying way, men need new information, skills, motives. New problems and situations everywhere constantly challenge their competence. Tragically, men find that the skills and talents which formerly made them models of competence in their community are of no value or are even demeaned and degraded in the new scheme of things.*

Figure 12
Pennsylvania's Ten Goals of Quality Education*

1. Help every child acquire the greatest possible understanding of himself or herself and appreciation of his or her worthiness as a member of society.

2. Help every child acquire understanding and appreciation of persons belonging to other social, cultural, and ethnic groups.

3. Help every child acquire, to the fullest possible extent, mastery of the basic skills in the use of words and numbers.

4. Help every child acquire a positive attitude toward the learning process.

5. Help every child acquire the habits and attitudes associated with responsible citizenship.

6. Help every child acquire good health habits and an understanding of conditions necessary for maintaining physical and emotional well-being.

7. Give every child the opportunity and encouragement to be creative in one or more fields of endeavor.

8. Help every child understand the opportunities open to him or her to prepare for a productive life, and help each child to take full advantage of these opportunities.

9. Help every child to understand and appreciate as much as possible of human achievement in the natural sciences, the social sciences, and the humanities and the arts.

10. Help every child to prepare for a world of rapid change and unforeseeable demands in which continuing education throughout adult life should be a normal expectation.

*Source: Guerriero, Carl A. "Assessing Attitudes and Values in Pennsylvania Schools," *Educational Leadership* (Alexandria, Va.: ASCD, January 1977), p. 269.

The complexity and everchanging nature of educational goals makes it difficult to formulate an all encompassing definition of competence. Arthur Chickering and Charles Claxton answer the question "What Is Competence?" in the book *Competency-Based Education* using the Bermuda onion as a metaphor. The outer layers of an onion show the most growth, but they draw sustenance from the inner core. The interdependence of educational goals resembles the Bermuda onion in that education is more than "life skills," "basic skills," or "personal fulfillment."

Current re-examinations of high school curriculum by various groups such as Mortimer Adler's Paideia Group, the National Association of Secondary School Principals, and the Carnegie Foun-

dation for the Advancement of Teaching, show that it is unlikely educators will soon find a clear consensus on what students need to know. Yet, certain common threads are emerging, reflecting the shared experiences, expectations, and convictions of thoughtful men and women throughout the country. Though definitions differ in detail, there is clearly a core of virtually indispensable attitudes, abilities, and knowledge without which today's students would be ill equipped.

A look at the goals and objectives of a few different school systems shows, if there should be doubt, that this core exists. It also shows the clear imprint of local conditions and concerns.

Superintendents and other practitioners cannot wait for the philosophers and researchers to ratify the prerequisite skills, concepts, attitudes and behaviors that characterize the "educated" person. Curricular goals are established without complete knowledge and scholarly verification. But this is not so bad. Simply adopting a set of goals by slapping on a new cover sheet or pasting over the originator's name with the school district's logo does not suffice. Chickering and Claxton indicate that

> *How people go about defining competence and selecting areas for program development may be more important than what is selected at the outset, because the process will determine the direction of further thought and selection.*

Stewart Purkey and Marshall Smith, friendly critics of "Effective Schools" (1983), suggest that common sense supports the notion of clear goals cited by the effective school proponents as a necessary ingredient. However, they consider goal setting as a dynamic process variable, rather than something that is imposed.

Purkey and Smith believe that: "Involving all relevant groups in the change and decision-making process increases the likelihood of successful implementation of new ideas and programs." Effective schools can become a reality when ". . . staff coalesce around common goals and share a pedagogical perspective that recognizes the importance of such things as order, purpose, and commitment to increasing student achievement."

The districts we have discussed have a common commitment to developing standards and objectives that are *responsive* both to professional knowledge and community mandates and that are *visible* to all concerned. Parents and other members of the public know what the school considers important "learnings" because they have had some input into the determination. Students know what they are expected to learn because teachers make clear to them the desired levels of performance and the value and utility of the learning task.

District staff members, above all, have a precise focus for their work. As William Spady explains, "Having publicly defined standards provides teachers with explicit targets for their instructional efforts—thereby leading to greater attention to related objectives, more clearly focused instruction, and appropriate remediation when required. The standards serve as the administrator's most valuable tool in generating data that can be used to improve instructional planning, delivery and management."

The last point, data-based management, is still another key to moving schools from where they are to where they could be.

Data, the Firm Foundation

From classroom to central office, rational and informed decision making is the oil that keeps the wheels of education running smoothly. Is Mary ready for fractions? What is the best use of limited inservice resources for the teachers in this building? What kind of reporting system will give parents in the district the clearest understanding of their children's progress? Making the best decisions requires having the best available information.

In a school with a firm data base, that information is probably generated constantly in small, discrete bits that can be configured to produce profiles of individual students or classrooms, entire schools, or the district as a whole. At the heart of this information system is the adoption of criterion-referenced assessment and reporting, a move that entails major departures from the traditional conception and use of student evaluation and testing.

Criterion-referenced indicators are developed for each stated learning outcome *before* curriculum is developed or instruction takes place. These indicators become the tangible targets for instruction. It is no longer anathema for teachers to "teach to the test," for now there is a precise match between instructional goals and test content.

Recordkeeping and reporting systems also match the performance criteria. The teacher's notebook (or the computer printout) no longer shows vague letter or number grades for each student. Instead, the record shows exactly which things each student has done and which things are yet to be mastered. This information is then used as the basis for decisions about next instructional steps. Teachers can use this information to:

- Monitor student progress on a specific objective
- Discover specific areas of student strengths and weaknesses
- Assess the effectiveness of particular instructional materials or approaches

- Regroup students for subsequent instruction
- Design or prescribe particular correctives for specific students
- Revise the content, approach, or timing of the assessment instrument itself
- Revise the substance, sequencing, or timing of curricular units
- Identify students in other classrooms at similar learning levels.

The information can also be used to report to parents whether students have mastered particular objectives or not.

Even more revolutionary, the criterion-referenced assessment system allows students to demonstrate mastery and receive "credit" for improved performance when it occurs—not just at the end of a unit, semester, or school year. "Promotion" is based on success, not on arbitrary time factors, and "continuous progress" can become reality.

Equally important, the system provides cumulative data that can become an important part of program evaluation and renewal. When student performance in a particular area is consistently lower (or higher) than predicted, for example, it is clear the instruction or the objectives or both need to be re-examined or perhaps realigned.

While such realignment is clearly the province of professionals, working within policy, school administrators must look not only to the profession but also beyond it for meaningful program renewal. They must examine social, technological, and economic trends, as well as educational trends. Does the instructional program mesh with the realities students will face when they leave school? If not, what changes need to be made? These questions cannot be answered in a vacuum. Their answers will be legitimated only through the participation and endorsement of all those affected by the work of the schools. And that includes not only staff, students, and parents, but the public at large.

Some Cautionary Remarks

Administrators should always heed the advice on the cover of the June 1983 *Kappan*—"Look Before You Leap" (in reference to articles on Effective Schools: Research). It may be a long way to the bottom (or the top, depending on one's perspective). The potential of instructional management is bright but it should not be hastily applied as a "quick fix" to all related educational ills. Take the case of Samuel King, the first superintendent of schools in Portland, Oregon. As reported by David Tyack in *The One Best System*, King started an examination program in which students had to have a passing mark to be promoted.

As Tyack narrates: "The results of the first round of examinations might have dismayed a heart less stout than King's. In seven classrooms out of a total of 21, none of the children passed. Only in six classrooms were more than half of the children promoted. But King maintained that the operation was a great success, though most of the patients died. Not surprisingly, in the next examinations teachers and pupils improved somewhat: this time between 13 percent and 75 percent of the children were promoted." King's examination program was initiated in 1874. By 1877 parents and teachers forced his resignation. King was trying to manage instruction with the imposition of "high standards," something we hear a lot of these days. However, by ignoring the remainder of the principles and procedures discussed in this book, not to mention political reality, his approach was not "effective."

A more "effective" superintendent was Emerson White who led the Cincinnati schools in 1888. After a review of school districts that had tied promotion to test results, White developed the following: "The plan provides for the promotion of pupils on the judgment of teachers, approved by the principals, but not on a single judgment formed at the end of the year . . . The test . . . is made an element of teaching—not the basis of promotion." White's response reflects what we would describe as an effective instructional management philosophy.

Regarding educational goals, competency-based education shares many similarities with effective instructional management. Scott Thomson, Executive Director of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, is on record supporting clear instructional goal statements since ". . . the redefinition of objectives and the setting of priorities that ordinarily accompany competency-based education could have a salutary effect on school management." While Thomson has outlined the positive benefits of competency-based education (see Figure 13), he also warns of possible problems:

- It can cause a major burden in recordkeeping and general paperwork, even when computerized.
- It may raise the costs of schooling.
- It may be opposed by many teachers.
- It may focus on the trivial.
- It can focus too much attention on a limited number of cognitive skills.
- It may make certification procedures more difficult.
- It requires careful inservice education of professional staff and increased communication.
- It may face court challenges.

Figure 13
Positive Outcomes When Secondary Schools Implement Competency-Based Education*

- Good relationships between teachers and students as they work together to meet external test requirements.
- Attention by teachers to the objectives and content of approved curricula.
- Understanding by students of job requirements and the relationship of those requirements to schooling.
- Certification of competencies required in the broader world rather than those used within the educational system.
- Reporting of student progress based upon clearly formulated criteria.
- The audit and treatment of eleventh and twelfth grade students with deficient skills.
- Development of effective remedial loops for focusing attention upon the diagnosis and correction of skill deficiencies.
- Motivation for older students to review and improve cognitive skills in basic fields.
- Growth in spontaneous or self-motivated learning.
- Development of problem-solving skills.
- Growth in initiative and responsibility.
- Ability to cope with the social milieu.
- Growth in social awareness.

*Scott Thompson, "Competency-Based Education and Secondary Schools: Current Practice and Some Implications," *Competency-Based Education* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1981), pp. 200-201.

The research on effective schools is being rapidly converted into formulas and checklists for immediate transport to awaiting educators. Larry Cuban in "Effective Schools: A Friendly But Cautionary Note" summarizes some problems and tradeoffs of this line of conduct. According to Cuban these enigmas are:

- No one knows how to create effective schools.
- The language is fuzzy.
- Effectiveness is a constricted concept.
- Research has been done in elementary schools.
- Standardization increases.
- Agenda narrows.
- Schools with high test scores escape the obligation to improve.

Yet, when he served as a superintendent, Cuban was in favor of effective school projects, as he still is. He believes that while test

scores will probably rise, educators should be asking themselves, "How can the broader, more complex, and less easily measured goals of school be achieved as we improve test scores?"

Important as they are, enhanced test scores are only part of the educational process. Jerome Bruner has said that "We may take as perhaps the most general objective of education that it cultivate excellence . . ." in a broad sense.

High expectations is what effective instructional management is all about. The public expects more from its schools. Teachers expect more from their students. Administrators expect more from their staffs. Through effective instructional management people know what is expected of them and because the goals are clear and the steps toward attaining them are precisely plotted and monitored, those expectations are usually achieved. And in the process, the gap between "what is" and "what might be" is being bridged.

Summary

Effective instructional management, as a systematic planned process, puts forward a powerful means for redeeming a few past glories and redressing some educational ills. Yet, by itself, instructional management cannot be a counterbalance for all that some perceive as wrong with schooling. As pointed out in this book, implementation of this approach has inherent tradeoffs. There is a danger that zealots will use effective instructional management to narrow the curriculum to the most base elements, ignoring the broad educational goals affecting quality of life issues. However, educators, and especially practitioners, are increasingly sophisticated about the winds of change blowing through the schoolhouse doors. Pragmatists, they "pick and choose" from the wide options of pedagogical fashions to select "what works in the classroom." The proof of effective instructional management systems will ultimately rest in the hands of sound leadership able to produce educational results, thereby improving learning for children.

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